ICAN SAMA-O-BASR HADITH SERIES

Nukhbatul-Fikr

نخبة الفكر في مصطلح أهل الأثر

(SELECTED THOUGHTS REGARDING THE TERMINOLOGIES OF THE PEOPLE OF HADITH)

A PRIMER INTO THE FIELD OF HADITH SCIENCES

BY AL-IMAM IBN AL-HAJR AL-ASQALANI

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SAMA-O-BASR PRESS

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لِوَجْهِ اللَّهِ

لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكُورًا

FOR THE SAKE OF ALLAH ALONE! WE SEEK
FROM YOU NEITHER REWARD NOR THANKS

QURAN 76:9

SAMA O BASR

A PROJECT OF ICAN

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST MERCIFUL, THE ALWAYS MERCIFUL

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Foreword

Introduction to the topic:

In the current age of deception and misinformation; it is critical for us to remain connected with the source that provides the truest, the most authentic, and the most correct guidance – the sunnah and the traditions of the beloved Prophet ﷺ Muhammad. This is what we need if we wish to remain on the straight path and to remain connected with an unshakeable anchor that would prevent us from all forms of misguidance. In order to achieve this, however, and in order to establish a connection with the prophetic traditions, the study of Usool Al-Hadith is a crucial pre-requisite. Usool Al-Hadith is one of the most important branches of Islamic knowledge that deals with the sciences of hadith[1] and the foundational

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[1] Hadith, according to most of the scholars, means

1. Qawl: The speech of the Prophet ﷺ
2. Fai'al: His actions
3. Taqreer: His tacit approval

(i.e. someone did or said something in his presence and he didn't reject him or prohibit him from that; rather he remained silent and acquiesced)

The term 'hadith' also applies to:

- the speech of companions, their actions, their acquiescence, and
- the speech of the tabayoon, their actions, and their acquiescence.

Each hadith consists of two parts:

principles that shape it. I firmly believe that a good understanding of this branch of knowledge coupled with the other Usool sciences (namely Usool At-Tafseer, i.e. foundational principles for the study and interpretation of the Quran, and Usool Al-Fiqh, i.e. foundational principles for Islamic jurisprudence) can adequately protect a person from misguidance and fatal errors in understanding the deen, inshaAllah. Once these foundations are well-established, we will be ready to deal with the challenges that would get thrown at us. When we will come across the orientalist who would hurl their misinterpretations, mistranslations, and half-quotes at us, we would know the questions are required to be asked back to them and the factors that are needed to be checked. Similarly, if any sponsored radical person would approach us with his twisted understanding of the religion, we would know which filters are required to be applied in order to separate the error and misguidance from the real and the beautiful way of life that our master ﷺ brought for us. With an understanding of the hadith sciences, we would know the importance of checking the authenticity and the grade of the hadith presented to us. We will know that if we have to form a ruling or assess the status of an existing ruling, we will need to go through all the narrations and other available evidence on the topic; and look at them holistically along with the practical examples from the Seerah of the Prophet ﷺ and the guidance from the Quran rather than forming opinions based on a single narration. We will know the factors that determine the authenticity of narrations; the level that their

- Sanad (the chain of narrators who narrated the hadith) and
- the matn (actual text of the hadith).

The field of Usool Al-Hadith, also called Ilm ul Hadith, has been described by Imam Suyuti, as the science of the principles by which the conditions of both the sanad (i.e. the chain of narration), and the matn (i.e. the text of the hadith) are known with the objective of distinguishing the sahih (i.e. authentic narrations) from other than it. Imam Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani explains in his book Tadrib ul Rawi that the preferred definition of this field of study is: knowledge of the principles by which the condition of the narrator and the narrated are determined.

chain elevates to, the strength of each link in the chain, the strength of the overall chain, any other chains strengthening the one under review, the status and authenticity of the text of the narration, and so on.

This book is your entry into this beautiful science of hadith – a field that is unparalleled in its depth, brilliance, and sublime status.

It is to be noted, however, that this book is only an introduction and an entry-point rather than a comprehensive coverage of the field. For a more detailed study, the students will need to study more in-depth texts on the subject.

The book in your hand has been compiled to achieve the following:

- To provide a short overview of the key categorizations of hadith and the reasons for these categorizations in terms of their text (matn) and the chains (Isnad); this would be suitable for the beginners and new entrants to the field
- To provide a quick recap and refresher for those who have already studied Usool Al-Hadith to a certain level; this would cater to the needs of those who hold beginner to intermediate level knowledge in the field.

For the beginner to intermediate level students, we have provided a minimum recommended curriculum below that should be studied along with this book in order to gain a reasonable depth in the field. We recommend this curriculum to even the graduates of the traditional Islamic seminaries as well, as this provides a holistic view of the field that the curriculum in many traditional madaris does not cater for.

- **Step 1**: *Usool Al-Hadith* – course and book by Dr. Bilal Philips
- **Step 2**: *The authority of Sunnah* – book by Mufti Taqi Uthmani

- **Step 3:** The Preservation of Hadith: A Brief Introduction to the Science of Hadith – book by Maulana Ibrahim Madani
- **Step 4**: *Hadith: Muhammad's ﷺ Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World* – book by Dr. Jonathan Brown
- **Step 5**: Nukhbatul Fikr (this book), OR, Muqaddinah Mishkat – book by Shah Abdul Haq Mohadith Dehlavi
- **Step 6**: *Nuzhatun Nadhr* – commentary of his own book (Nukhbatul Fikr) by Imam Ibn Hajr Al-Asqalani, OR Muqaddimah Ibn Salah

Those who wish to go to a more advanced level in the field will not only need to study the more elaborated texts on the subject in general but also study the specialized books on each aspect of the field including the detailed biographies of the narrators, Ilm At-takhreej[2] (extracting and assessing different paths of the same narrations), comparison of the Usool of various hadith scholar and their implications, abrogation in ahadith, the study of the corroboration of ahadith, the detailed studies on the criticism of various attributes of narrators, the use of hadith in the fiqh of various schools of thought, and so on.

With this brief overview and context, let us now briefly review some of the key features of the original book whose translation we have endeavored to present.

Introduction to the book:

Nukhbatul Fikr is a brief overview of the sciences of hadith written by Imam Ibn Al-Hajr Al-Asqalani. As he mentions in the introduction of the book, it was written

[2] When a narration is mentioned with its chain in a book of hadith, it is said that the author of the book has done the takhreej, e.g. we hear from the scholars and see in their writings the mention اخرجه البخاري (i.e. Bukhari did this narration's takhreej) and so on. The term Takhreej is also used when other scholars find all the appearances of a narration in the original books/sources of hadith (known as Masadir Al-Asalaiyyah) and mention the names of the books in which it is found, the relevant chapters in those books and so on; along with the hukam (ruling) regarding the classification of the narration.

in response to a request from some people who asked him to provide a summary of the key points to remember about the field of hadith studies, i.e. Usool Al-hadith. It is said that he wrote this treatise during one of his travels. This aspect (i.e. writing the book during the travel) highlights a continuous practice of our pious predecessors that nothing stopped them from their intellectual quests – irrespective of whether they were in travel or behind the bars or imprisoned in a well; their quest for teaching and learning continued without any barriers. This book is another testimonial to this beautiful practice and sunnah of our pious predecessors that we all need to adapt too.

After this treatise was written, the Imam taught it to his students. Once they studied the text, their thirst for further knowledge of the field of Usool Al-Hadith increased. The students insisted on the Imam to write a sharh (commentary) of Nukhbatul Fikr. He responded to this request too and wrote the renowned commentary, Nuzhatun Nadhr. These two books (Nukhbah and Nuzhah) have always remained in the curriculum of Muslim seminaries across the globe. Though Imam Ibn Hajr also wrote numerous other treatises in the field of Usool Al-Hadith, the Nukhbah and Nuzhah have received an unmatched acceptance among the people of knowledge. These books provide an excellent overview of the terminologies of hadith, categories of narrations, and the methodology of the evaluation of ahadith.

Introduction to the author[3]:

The author of Nukhbatul Fikr, the great Hafidh[4] Al-Imam Abul Fadhl Shihab Ad-

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[3] Adapted from the book, Bustan ul Mohaditheen (Garden of the hadith scholars) and other sources

[4] Hafidh is one of the categories of scholars of hadith. There are various classifications of the people of hadith. There brief description is as follows:

Din Ahmed Ibn Ali Al-Asqalani was born on 23rd Shaban 773A.H. (1372AD). Though his parents passed away while he was only four years old, his elder sister took responsibility for her brother's education and organized for him learning under various luminary scholars of that time. Being a very bright student from the beginning, he mastered numerous Islamic sciences at an early age. While he was only twelve years of age, he had the honor of leading Taraweeh[5] in Masjid Al-Haram. He traveled to various centers of knowledge in Egypt, Syria, Hejaz, and Yemen to seek the light of the divine. This quest for the light transformed him into a colossal lighthouse whose light still shines and illuminates the paths for the seekers. Realizing the light that Allah swt had blessed the Imam with, even his teachers used to give him preference over themselves. He dedicated his life to the study and teaching of hadith.

Imam Ibn Al-Hajr is also famous for his 'Dawrah Al-Hadith' in which he used to complete the teaching of major hadith collections from cover to cover in a matter of days through rapid reading and teaching. The legacy of Imam Ibn Hajr comprises of more than 150 books.

He left this immortal world on 27 Dhul Hajj 852AH. It is said about his funeral there was no one who did not attend it. Be it the Caliph, the Ameer, or the

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- Rawi: Narrator of hadith
- Talib: A beginner into the field who is the process of seeking basic knowledge
- Mohadith: This title is used for the teachers who are perfect in their teaching of hadith. Imam and Shaykh are also mentioned for this level by various scholars.
- Hafidh: The scholar who has memorizes more than a hundred thousand ahadith and has full grasp over them in terms of sanad, matn, jarh wa ta'deel, and history.
- Hujjat: The scholar who meets the above criteria but for three hundred thousand ahadith

[5] Special night prayer during Ramadan

common man - everyone was in a quest to give a shoulder to his body in his journey to the next phase of his life.

Introduction to the commentary and its format:

Though a lot of good translations are available in the Urdu language, all the English translations that we could access seemed to be a bit difficult from the perspective of common learners. Moreover, at some places, it was identified that the translation conveyed a completely different meaning to the original text. We, therefore, initiated this project to compile a translation and commentary of the book that is easily accessible and understandable by the beginner-level learners. I do not claim that I am successful in achieving this objective, however, I pray to Allah swt to enable this book to achieve the objective with which it was written.

The commentary in this book has been provided in three forms:

- Inline – within the brackets so that the readers can understand the point being discussed as they come across it rather than continuing to read without understanding and reviewing the commentary later on which is provided somewhere later in the text
- Within the grey boxes spread throughout the text – to provide additional explanation and examples as applicable
- In the footnotes

During the compilation of this book, the following and several other resources have been referred to:

- English translation and commentary of Nuzhatun Nadhr by Dr. Ather Shahbaz Hussain which he compiled as a part of his Ph.D. thesis. I found this to be the best translation and the best commentary among all the

other books that I referred to; Indeed, a highly valuable resource in the English language

- English translation by Ustadh Musa Furber
- English translation by Ustadh Abu Najm Al-Iskander
- Urdu commentary Tuhfatu Ad-Durar by Mufti Saeed Ahmed Palanpuri
- Urdu commentary Zubdatu Al-Fikr by Maulana Muhammad Nasir ul Qadri Al-Madani
- Urdu commentary Qatrat Al-Ittar by Maulana Mehmood Alam Safdar Okarvi
- Muqaddimah Mishqat by Shah Abdul Haq Mohadith Dehlavi and its commentary by Muhammad Nabeel Musharraf
- Other relevant texts and books

May Allah swt reward the authors of all of the above books for their highly valuable contributions to this blessed field that helps us connect with the words that came from the best of the creations of Allah swt. We pray to Allah swt to give acceptance to this book and make it a source of salvation for its author and everyone involved in facilitating its writing and publication.

Muhammad Nabeel Musharraf

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

مقدمة

قَالَ الْإِمَامُ الْحَافِظُ: أَحْمَدُ بْنُ عَلِيِّ بْنِ حَجَرٍ الْعَسْقَلَانِيُّ – يَرْحَمُهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالى

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَمْ يَزَلْ عَلِيمًا قَدِيرًا ، وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَهُ إِلَى النَّاسِ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا ، وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيمًا كَثِيرًا.

Praise and salutations

Al-Imam Al-Hafiz Ahmed Bin Ali Bin Hajr Al-Asqalani, may Allah's mercy be upon him, said:

Praise and thanks to Allah who never ceases to know everything and having power over everything. May Allah's countless blessings and peace be upon our master Muhammad ﷺ, whom He sent to all the mankind as a bearer of glad tidings and a warner, and upon his progeny, and his Companions.

It has been a practice of the scholars to start their lectures and books with the Hamd (praise and thanks to Allah swt) and salutations upon our beloved master ﷺ. The students of knowledge too should always strive to adopt this practice.

An overview of the literature in the field of Usool Al-Hadith

أَمَّا بَعْدُ[6]: فَإِنَّ التَّصَانِيفَ فِي اصْطِلَاحِ أَهْلِ الْحَدِيثِ قَدْ كَثُرَتْ ، وَبُسِطَتْ وَاخْتُصِرَتْ

To proceed: Indeed, the books of the nomenclature (or terminologies, called Mustalahat) used by the people of hadith (i.e. hadith specialists, mohaditheen) are many. They are available in expanded as well as abridged forms.

Following are some of the important works in the field of Usool Al-Hadith as can be seen in the commentaries of Nukhbatul Fikr including the Nuzhah. It is to be noted that this does not enlist every single work written before Nukhbatul Fikr. However, it does provide an overview of why the Nukhbah and Nuzhah were written:

- Amongst the first to write in this area was al-Qazi Abu Muhammad Ar-Ramahurmuzi; his book is called al-Muhaddith al-fasil. However, he did not complete this work. This fourth-century work includes discussions on areas such as the etiquettes of the narrator/disciples and hadith masters, methods of delivery, and the efforts of hadith masters in the pursuit of knowledge.

[6] These words are used when transitioning from one topic to another.

- Then came al-Hakim Abu ‘AbdAllah al-Nisaburi[7]; but his book, Marifat Ulum Al-Hadith, was neither ordered systematically nor refined; however, it was a valuable treatise covering fifty sections dealing with the rules of narration.
- He was followed by Abu Nu‘aym al-Isbahani[8] who added to his predecessor’s works through his book Marifat Ulum Al-Hadith Ala Kitab Al-Hakim; he, however, left out certain areas for those after him to complete.
- Then came al-Khatib Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. He wrote al-Kifaya on the rules of narration and al-Jami‘ li Akhlaq al-Rawi Wa Adab al-Sam’ay, on the etiquettes of narration. In fact, he wrote separate treatises on almost all areas of hadith criticism. Al-Hafiz Abu Bakr ibn Nuqta said: ‘Every impartial observer knows that all hadith scholars after al-Khatib al-Baghdadi were dependent upon his books.’
- Then after them came others and they took a portion from this knowledge. Thus al-Qadi ‘Iyyad[9] compiled a wonderful book which he called al-Ilma‘ and Abu Hafs al-Mayyanishi wrote a pamphlet called Ma la Yasa‘u al-Muhaddith Jahluhu
- Then came the famous Imam of hadith - Al-Hafiz al-Faqih Taqi al-Din Abu ‘Amr ‘Uthman ibn al-Salah (commonly known as Ibn Salah) of Damascus.

[7] There was a criticism about Al-Hakim Al-Nisaburi that he was either a Shia or tilted towards them. However, this claim was contested. He is the one who wrote Mustadrak Al-Hakim in which he included the ahadith which he believed were meeting the criteria set by Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim however they didn’t include them in their collections. The scholars, however, had certain objections regarding many of the narrations in that book. Imam Dhahabi wrote an abridged version of that called Talkhees Al-Mustadrak which is considered to be a much more reliable version than the original book.

[8] The famous book, Hilyatul Aulia was also authored by him.

[9] It is said about Qadi Iyyad that there was no one in his time who had written more books than him. One of his most famous books is Ash-Shifa fi Sharhf Al-Mustafa ﷺ.

He gathered his famous book when he took over teaching at al-Madrasa al-Ashrafiyya. He refined the fields of hadith in this piece of work and dictated it to his students bit by bit. As it was completed over time and in different sitting, an orderly composition of the book could not be achieved suitably. He included various works of al-Khatib al-Baghdadi in his book while adding his own insights to them. In this book, he gathered what had hitherto been scattered in different books[10]. For this reason, people adhered to it and followed its path. The book resulted in countless pieces of literature devoted to it, such as poems, abridged versions, commentaries, shortened versions, and other important genres of literature in the field of hadith studies.

In addition to the generic works, the scholars have also written books dealing with the specific aspects of the sciences of hadith. Some of them include:

- The "study of the circumstances surrounding the genesis of each hadith," i.e. the reasons for why the hadith was uttered;
- The study of the *Gharib al-Hadith*; this type of literature provides "a kind of hadith glossary" of uncommon or less common words found in hadith literature;
- The study of *illal al-hadith*, which examines any hidden or apparent deficiencies in the text and/or the chain of ahadith;

[10] This book comprises of 65 chapters. The first 33 chapters describe the various technical terms of hadith terminology which describe the conditions of a hadith's authenticity, or acceptability as a basis for Islamic jurisprudence. The following chapters relate to the isnad, or chain of narration. Next are a series of chapters pertaining to the etiquette to be observed by hadith scholars and manners of transcription. The last chapters describe various issues relating to the narrators of hadith including naming conventions.

- The study of *al-hadith al-mukhtalif*, which attempts to reconcile the narrations that apparently look contradictory but when looked at in detail, they are found to reconcile with each other
- The study of *naskh* (abrogation), *nasikh* (i.e. abrogating narration) and *mansukh* (i.e. abrogated narration) in hadith, which explains which rulings came earlier, which came later, and which were replaced by others;
- The study of *sharh al-hadith*, i.e. the commentaries on hadith
- The study of transmitters of hadith, *ʿilm al-rijal* (translated as 'science of men' though it also includes the study of women narrators) which provides biographies of the narrators and the different categories they fall under.
- The study of *ʿilm jarḥ wa taʿdil*[11] which attempts to verify the reliability of transmitters of hadith, their deficiencies, and virtues;

Why did Imam Ibn Hajr write this book

فَسَأَلَنِي بَعْضُ الْإِخْوَانِ أَنْ أُلَخِّصَ لَهُمُ الْمُهِمَّ مِنْ ذَلِكَ ، فَأَجَبْتُهُ إِلَى سُؤَالِهِ؛ رَجَاءَ

[11] "Jarh" has a variety of meanings in Arabic, such as injury, sarcasm, and acquisition.

And "ta'deel" is from the Arabic root, "'adl" (justice), which means to balance or straighten what is bent.

In the terminology of hadith sciences, "jarh" means to criticize, or critically analyze, the righteousness and/or accuracy of a transmitter of hadiths, such that his or her hadith is considered as unacceptable. On the other hand, "ta'deel" is to accept the righteousness of a narrator leading to the acceptance of his or her hadith or testimony. This Jarh and tadil is done to look at both aspects of the character (called Adalah عدالته) of the narrators and the accuracy (called Dhabatah ضبطه) of preservation of his or her knowledge of hadith through memory or writing and so on.

الِانْدِرَاجِ فِي تِلْكَ الْمَسَالِكِ

Some of my brothers requested me to summarize the important aspects of that (i.e. the field of Usool Al-Hadith). I, hence, responded to their request with a hope that my name might get included in the walkers on this path (of the people of virtue).

CHAPTER 2

Types of narrations according to the number of chains

What is 'Khabar'

This section deals with the different types of *'Khabar'* as per the number of their chains. It is therefore important to explain the term *'khabar'* before going into further discussion.

Imam Ibn Al-Hajr Al-Asqalani explains the following key points about *Khabar* in *Nuzhah*:

- Many scholars consider the '*khabar*' to be synonymous with hadith.
- According to other scholars, the hadith is what originates from the Prophet ﷺ (i.e. his sayings, his actions, and his tacit approvals); while *Khabar* is something that derives from others
- Moreover, the term *Al-Khabari* is used for historians and those who engage in similar disciplines; on the other hand, the scholars of hadith are referred to as '*muhadditheen*'.
- Some scholars also explain that the relationship between *Khabar* and Hadith is that the *Khabar* is general (i.e. Aaam) and the hadith is specific

(i.e. Khaas). In other words, every hadith is a khabar, but every Khabar is not hadith.

Figure 1: The relationship between Khabar and Hadith

Each khabar or hadith consists of two main components – sanad and matn. Sanad, linguistically, refers to something that is trusted upon. Without the Sanad, the narration does not have a ground to stand on.

Each Sanad (chain of narration) contains a particular 'tareeq' (i.e. way; singular of 'turuq') through which the report has reached from the Prophet ﷺ to the Mohadith (hadith scholar who reported the hadith).

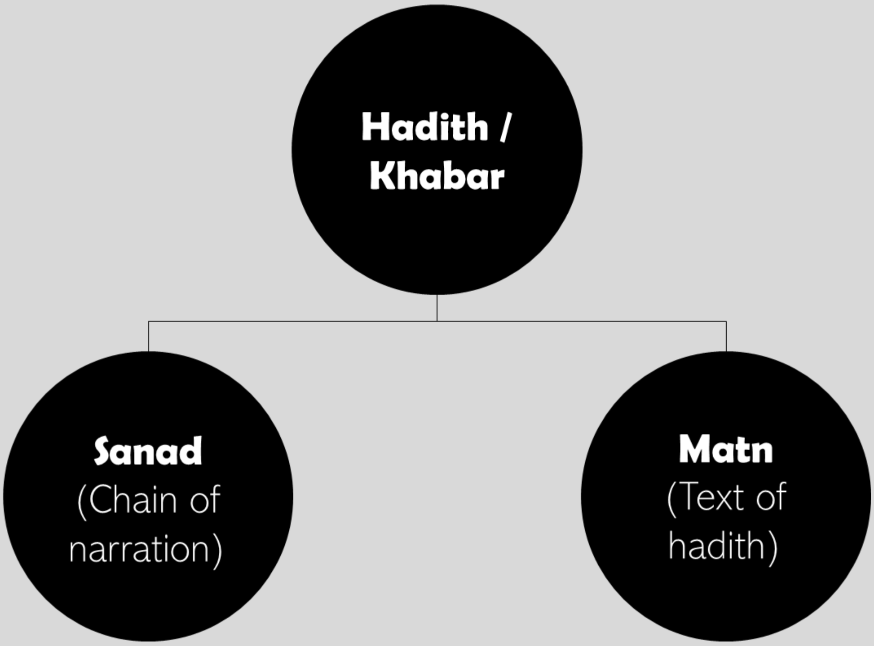

Figure 2: Parts of hadith

Four types of narrations:

الْخَبَرُ إِمَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ:

- طُرُقٌ بِلَا عَدَدٍ مُعَيَّنٍ،
- أَوْ مَعَ حَصْرٍ بِمَا فَوْقَ الِاثْنَيْنِ،
- أَوْ بِهِمَا،
- أَوْ بِوَاحِدٍ .

The paths of a report (khabar) are either:

1. Without any specifically defined number (i.e. many routes)
2. A specific number greater than at least two paths
3. Two paths
4. One path

Mutawatir narrations:

فَالْأَوَّلُ: الْمُتَوَاتِرُ: الْمُفِيدُ لِلْعِلْمِ الْيَقِينِيِّ بِشُرُوطِهِ.

The first: It is called the mass–transmitted report (mutawatir) and conveys definite knowledge (Al-ilm Al-yaqini) when its conditions are met.

Expanded definition of mutawatir hadith:

Mutawatir narration is one which is conveyed by narrators that are so numerous at each stage of the chain that it is not conceivable that they would have agreed upon an untruth or a lie; such a narration is thus accepted as unquestionable in its reliability. In other words, a hadith is said to be *mutawatir* if it was reported by a significant number of narrators at each level in the chain of narration, thus reaching each succeeding generation through multiple chains of narration leading back to its source. This confirms that such a hadith is authentically attributed to its source at a level above reasonable doubt. This is due to its being beyond the historical possibility that narrators could have conspired to forge a narration.

No other conditions of authenticity are checked for such narrations if they are found through a large number of different chains.

Types of tawatur:

Hadiths can be mutawatir in:

- Either the actual text, or
- The meaning, or
- Both.

An important condition about mutawatir narrations:

It is also said that one of the conditions of mutawatir ahadith is that they should be based on some sensual experience, e.g. someone saw something, or heard something, and so on. Whatever involves interpretation or use of intellect in

identifying and explaining the matter, such narrations cannot be considered as Mutawatir.

How many narrators are required at each level of the mutawatir narration:

There is a difference of opinion regarding how many narrators are required for Mutawatir narrations at each level in the chain. The opinions range from four, five, seven, ten, and up to 70 at each level. A rare opinion also suggests the number of narrators at each level is required to be 313 (however, this would not leave many ahadith that could be classified as Mutawatir.)

The most mutawatir hadith:

The most mutawatir hadith is: “Whoever lies upon me deliberately, let him take his seat in Hellfire.” This hadeeth has been narrated by over seventy Companions.

Ahad narrations:

(The ahadith that are not mutawatir are considered ahad and they comprise of the following categories.)

MASHUR:

وَالثَّانِي: الْمَشْهُورُ، وَهُوَ الْمُسْتَفِيضُ عَلَى رَأْيٍ.

The second: It is called the well–known report (mashhur) and it is also called the well-circulated report (mustafidḥ) according to an opinion (held by some scholars).

Mustafidh means something that is spread out. This shows the general acceptability of these narrations and hence the name.

An example of mashhur/mustafidh hadeeth is: “Indeed Allah does not take away knowledge by stripping it away from the people, rather he takes away knowledge by the death of the scholars…”

It is to be noted that some scholars say that those narrations are also classified as Mustafidh which were singular in the times of companions (e.g. one companion reported it) but then they become spread out to such an extent that it became impossible that the later generations would have forged it. This is the definition adopted by the Fuqaha; whereas the mohaditheen adopt the definition provided in the text.

AZIZ:

وَالثَّالِثُ: : الْعَزِيزُ ، وَلَيْسَ شَرْطًا لِلصَّحِيحِ خِلَافًا لِمَنْ زَعَمَهُ.

The third: It is called the rare report (‘aziz). It is not the condition for authenticity, contrary to the opinion of some (of the scholars of hadith).

An example of Aziz hadith is: “None of you truly believes until I am more beloved to him than his father, his son and all of mankind” which has been narrated by Anas R.A. and Abu Hurairah R.A.

According to Ibn Arabi, being Aziz was the condition put by Imam Bukhari for selecting ahadith in Saheeh Bukhari. Upon this, an objection was made that the hadith ‘indeed the actions are by intentions’ was only narrated by one and does not meet the criteria of minimum of two narrators at each stage of the chain.

To this, he mentioned that as Umar R.A. mentioned that in a khutbah and no other companions had an objection on that, the hadith on intentions is an exception to the general rule set by Imam Bukhari. However, this opinion was also contested as there are singular narrators in the chain after Umar R.A. too. Ibn Hibban and other scholars do not agree with Ibn Arabi's opinion about the shaykhayn (i.e. Imam Bukhari and Muslim) that they only considered Aziz ahadith (and above) to be acceptable. They mention that singular ahadith can also be classified as Saheeh if they meet the criteria set forth for the Saheeh narrations and that criteria does not include the requirement to be Aziz, Mashhur, or Mutawatir only.

GHAREEB:

وَالرَّابِعُ: الْغَرِيبُ.

وَكُلُّهَا – سِوَى الْأَوَّلِ – آحَادٌ .

The fourth: It is called the uncommon report (gharib).

All of them except for the first category are called solitary reports (aḥad).

It is important to distinguish between the 'Ghareeb-ul-Hadith' (as a science) and 'Ghareeb Narrations'. The former is the study of uncommon words in the matn of narrations whereas the latter is the classification of ahadith that have no more than one narrator at one or more levels in the chain.

DERIVATION OF RULINGS FROM AHAD NARRATIONS:

وَفِيهَا الْمَقْبُولُ وَالْمَرْدُودُ؛ لِتَوَقُّفِ الِاسْتِدْلَالِ بِهَا عَلَى الْبَحْثِ عَنْ أَحْوَالِ رُوَاتِهَا دُونَ الْأَوَّلِ.

وَقَدْ يَقَعُ فِيهَا مَا يُفِيدُ الْعِلْمَ النَّظَرِيَّ بِالْقَرَائِنِ عَلَى الْمُخْتَارِ.

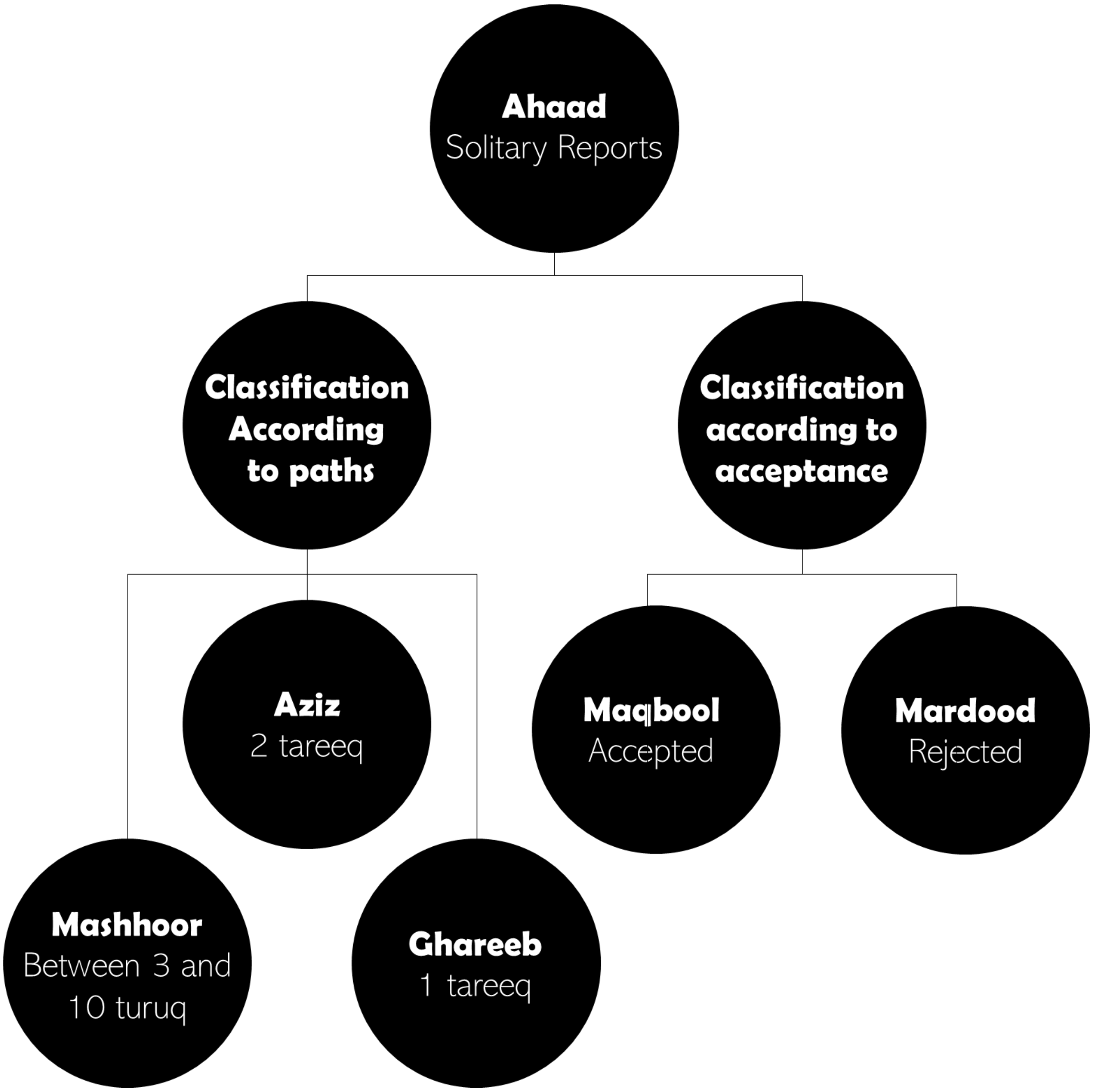

Figure 3: Classification tree of Ahad narrations

Among these reports, there are accepted as well as the rejected narrations as the matter of drawing conclusions about them depends on the investigation of circumstances of their narrators - except for the first category (i.e. the mutawatir ahadith as there is no need for such an investigation in them considering a large number of paths from which the narration comes). Yet inductive knowledge (‘ilm nadhari[12]) can be extracted from them based on certain factors; this is the preferred opinion.

It means that even the ahad ahadith are to be accepted for deriving rulings as long as they meet the criteria of soundness and corroboration defined by the mohaditheen. There are numerous examples of a khabar being accepted from a single person, e.g. when one of the companions came to people in Quba who were offering prayer and he informed them that the Qiblah has been changed to Ka’abah, they accepted his report and changed their direction of prayer. Numerous other examples can be given in this regard.

For checking the criteria for the authenticity of narrations, thorough evaluations were conducted by the scholars of hadith. However, when it comes to Mutawatir ahadith, they are reported through so many paths that there is no possibility of them not being authentic. Therefore, no evaluations of the narrators are conducted for the mutawatir narrations.

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[12] It is that knowledge which is acquired after research, analysis, reflection and pondering. Accordingly, it can be said that it is that knowledge or conviction that is only attained by those who have some sort of expertise (لمن له أهلية النظر – i.e. for those who have ability to see). For example, the answer to a difficult maths sum, is only solvable by a person who has some expertise in mathematics. Those who do not have such expertise will not be able to solve that sum. Furthermore, those who have the expertise, will indeed reach the correct answer, and once they do so, they are convinced of their answer. This type of conviction is labelled: ‘ilm Nadhari.

In other words, it is that type of knowledge/conviction/certainty that is only attained by certain people, based on their qualification and expertise. Its opposite is Ilm Dhururi which is the ilm that can be acquired by everyone, without the need for any qualification. Like: when the sun rises, every person is convinced that it is daytime.

FURTHER EXPLANATION OF GHAREEB NARRATIONS

ثُمَّ الْغَرَابَةُ: إِمَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ فِي أَصْلِ السَّنَدِ ، أَوْ لَا.

فَالْأَوَّلُ: الْفَرْدُ الْمُطْلَقُ . وَالثَّانِي: الْفَرْدُ النِّسْبِيُّ ، وَيَقِلُّ إِطْلَاقُ الْفَرْدِيَّةِ عَلَيْهِ .

As far as Al-Gharabah, (Uniqueness) is concerned, it can be:

- Either in the root of the chain of narration
- Or, not in it (i.e. it is elsewhere in the chain and not in the root)

Shaykh Abu Khadeejah explains: "That hadeeth which has been narrated at some stage in the chain of narration by a singular narrator, either at every level of the chain of narration or at some stages or even at just one point in the chain (i.e. in the sanad) – and having many narrators at other levels in the chain at other than that point does not remove it from being ghareeb because the defining factor is having one person at some stage in the chain."

The first type (i.e. gharabah or uniqueness in the root of the chain) is called al-Fard al-Mutlaq, or "Absolutely Unique" narration.

Al-Fard al-Mutlaq hadith is that in which a particular narrator is the only one who narrated this hadeeth at the root of the chain. For example, the famous hadith, "Actions are but by intentions." Is only narrated by Umar ibn al-Khattaab R.A. Being ghareeb does not by itself render a hadith as unacceptable.

The second (i.e. the one having uniqueness somewhere in the chain other than its root) is called al-Fard an-Nisbi, or "Relatively Unique"; and the term 'unique'

(fard) is rarely used in this connotation without qualification.

An example of such a hadith is: “The Prophet ﷺ entered Makkah and upon his head, there was a helmet.”

CHAPTER 3

Types of narrations according to the strength of hadith

This chapter is very important from the point of view of understanding the key classifications of ahadith and the factors that govern that.

Also, sometimes the students would note that in the books of ahadith, the narrations would have certain wordings from the compilers regarding their opinion about whether the hadith is Saheeh, Hassan, or Daif. However, they would note that the other authenticators would apply a different classification to them. For example, a narration might be mentioned as Daif by the Mohadith, but a Muhaqqiq (researcher or authenticator) may classify it as Daif. Similarly, sometimes a hadith mentioned as Hassan by the compiler of ahadith or the mohadith might be classified as Daif by the Muhaqqiq. Why is that? The answer to this question will inshaAllah be available after studying this chapter.

Saheeh Li-Dhatihi narrations:

وَخَبَرُ الْآحَادِ بِنَقْلِ

- عَدْلٍ تَامِّ الضَّبْطِ،
- مُتَّصِلِ السَّنَدِ،
- غَيْرِ مُعَلَّلٍ
- وَلَا شَاذٍّ

هُوَ الصَّحِيحُ لِذَاتِهِ، وَتَتَفَاوَتُ رُتَبُهُ بِتَفَاوُتِ هَذِهِ الْأَوْصَافِ.

وَمِنْ ثَمَّ قُدِّمَ صَحِيحُ الْبُخَارِيِّ، ثُمَّ مُسْلِمٍ، ثُمَّ شَرْطُهُمَا.

Those solitary traditions (or Ahad ahadith) that have been narrated:

- By Adl narrators (i.e. they are trustworthy and pious narrators whose integrity is beyond doubt) who have good dhabt[13] (i.e. precision in memory, writing, and so on)
- With Muttasil or unbroken chain (i.e. narrated via a continuously connected chain of narrators)
- Without any hidden defect (free of illal) and
- Without being Shadhdh (i.e. the hadith does not contradict with the hadith narrated by the narrators who are more sound than the narrators of this hadith)

[13] Dhabt is of two types:

- Dhabt As-Sadr: Accuracy in memorization of hadith
- Dhabt Al-Kitabah: Accuracy in recording and writing the hadith

are called Saheeh Li-Dhatihi (Authentic by themselves) narrations; though their strength varies with the strength of the above-mentioned factors (i.e. some ahadith are more authentic or more saheeh than the others).

Consequently, Saheeh al-Bukhari takes precedence, then Saheeh Muslim, then the ahadith that meet the criteria (for authenticity) set by both of them.

It is to be noted that books of hadith such as Saheeh Bukhari contain ahadith that come with the chain as well as those that come without a chain. For example, Imam Bukhari has picked certain narrations or sayings or opinions as titles for certain groups of ahadith (Ba'ab). Scholars explain the ahadith mentioned in these two books are considered Saheeh, however, the titles and headings (even if they look like narrations) are not considered as Saheeh unless they come with Isnad in the same or other books and if they meet the other criteria for authenticity.

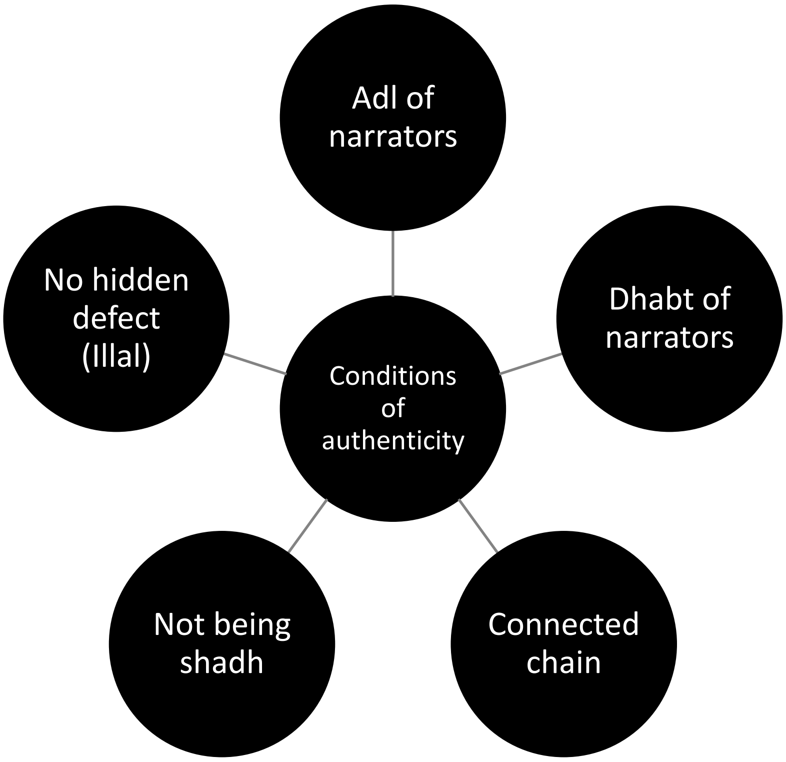

Figure 4: Conditions for hadith being Saheeh Li Dhatihi (Authentic by itself)

With regards to the condition of authenticity mentioned above, the scholars of hadith have proposed the following hierarchy to explain what they consider to be more authentic (sorted from higher to lower levels of authenticity).

1. The ahadith which are agreed upon (i.e. mentioned in Saheeh Bukhari as well as Saheeh Muslim). The famous book, Al-Lulu wal Marjan (Corals and Pearls) is a collection of all agreed upon narrations from the books of Shaykhain (i.e. the two shaykhs, meaning Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim)
2. The ahadith narrated by Imam Bukhari (but not narrated by Imam Muslim)
3. The ahadith narrated by Imam Muslim (but not narrated by Imam Bukhari)
4. The ahadith that meet the conditions of authenticity set by both the Shaykhayn but they have not mentioned them in their collections
5. The ahadith that meet the conditions of authenticity set by Imam Bukhari but he has not mentioned them
6. The ahadith that meet the conditions of authenticity set by Imam Muslim but he has not mentioned them
7. The ahadith that are authentic according to the conditions set by other Imams of hadith

At this moment, it might also be important to clarify that Saheeh Bukhari and Saheeh Muslim do not contain all the available Saheeh narrations. Saheeh or authentic narrations are also found in other books of As-Sihaah (the 'Saheeh' collections) as well as other books. It is accordingly very important for the students of knowledge to refer to all the relevant collections in order to identify

the relevant narrations or to find various paths of the same matn. It is possible that a narration might come with a strong Isnad in one collection and the weak ones in the other.

Hassan Li-Dhatihi narrations:

فَإِنْ خَفَّ الضَّبْطُ: فَالْحَسَنُ لِذَاتِهِ، وَبِكَثْرَةِ طُرُقِهِ يُصَحَّحُ.

فَإِنْ جُمِعَا فَلِلتَّرَدُّدِ فِي النَّاقِلِ حَيْثُ التَّفَرُّدُ، وَإِلَّا فَبِاعْتِبَارِ إِسْنَادَيْنِ.

If a narrator's dhabt is not strong (while the conditions of Adalah are met), then the narration is called Hasan Li Dhatihi (i.e. fair on its own merit; it is a level lower than the 'Saheeh'). However, if it is reported through many chains, it can be classified to the level of Saheeh (because of corroboration which is additional evidence – such a narration would be called Saheeh Li Ghayrihi).

The reason for using the terms Saheeh and Hassan for the same hadith:

When these two descriptions (i.e. Saheeh and Hassan) are combined, (i.e. a hadith is called *Hassanun Saheeh,* like how Imam Tirmidhi has categorized many ahadith):

- It is because of some underlying issue or confusion about the transmitter of the narration when it is Fard (singular);
- Otherwise, it is because of the combination of the two chains of narration of that hadith (i.e. one of them is Hassan and the other is Saheeh).

The narrations that do not reach the status of either Hassan Li Dhatihi (i.e. Hasan by itself) or Hassan Li Ghayrihi (Hassan due to other factors, e.g.

corroboration, etc), then such narrations are known as Daif. When a Daif narration is reported through multiple chains or is corroborated by a stronger narration, then it acquires the status of Hassan Li Gahyrihi.

Please note that Daif is different from Mawdoo (fabricated narrations). Mawdoo narrations are absolutely rejected. With regards to Daif narrations, there are several factors that can lead to their weakness, e.g. the factors related to Adalah and the factors related to Dhabt (e.g. weak memory and so on). It is reported from Imam Ahmed that he said that when it comes to the matter of Halal and Haram, we are very strict with regards to the Isnad; however, when it comes to the encouragement of good actions (Targheeb wa tarheeb), virtues of good deeds (fadhail Aamal), and good akhlaq, we allow acting upon the weak narrations. A similar opinion is also reported from Imam Nawawi, Imam Suyuti, and other scholars.

CHAPTER 4

Corroboration and comparison of the contents of hadith

Dealing with additional wording in the ahadith

Sometimes it happens that a hadith is reported through multiple chains. These narrations that are reported through different chains are called versions of the narration. Sometimes it can happen that some of the versions would contain some additional details. How should that matter be dealt with? This chapter provides an answer to this question.

وَزِيَادَةُ رَاوِيهِمَا مَقْبُولَةٌ مَا لَمْ تَقَعْ مُنَافِيَةً لِمَنْ هُوَ أَوْثَقُ.

Any additional wording (to the text of hadith) by the narrators of these two (types of narrations i.e. a Saheeh hadith and a Hassan hadith) is acceptable as long as (the additional wording) does not contradict a more trustworthy narrator.

Classification of ahadith in case of a contradiction:

فَإِنْ خُولِفَ بِأَرْجَحَ فَالرَّاجِحُ الْمَحْفُوظُ، وَمُقَابِلُهُ الشَّاذُّ، وَ مَعَ الضَّعْفِ فَالرَّاجِحُ

الْمَعْرُوفُ، وَمُقَابِلُهُ الْمُنْكَرُ.

(However, when a contradiction happens, the following rules apply.)

If it (i.e. the addition) contradicts with what is a more preferred narration (either due to its strength owing to its narrators or other factors), than the preferred narration is termed al-Mahfoodh, or the "Preserved Report" and its opposite is termed ash-Shadhdh, or the "Abnormal Report".

- (in addition to the above, if the contradictory addition) contains any weakness, then the preferred report is termed al-Ma'ruf, or the "Known Report"; while its opposite is termed al-Munkar, or the "Bad Report."

Corroborating narrations:

وَالْفَرْدُ النِّسْبِيُّ: إِنْ وَافَقَهُ غَيْرُهُ فَهُوَ الْمُتَابِعُ.

وَإِنْ وُجِدَ مَتْنٌ يُشْبِهُهُ فَهُوَ الشَّاهِدُ.

وَتَتَبُّعُ الطُّرُقِ لِذَلِكَ هُوَ الِاعْتِبَارُ.

- When a relatively–unique report (fard nisbi) is in agreement with other narrations, it is called a corroborative chain (mutabi‘).
- If a report is found whose matn resembles it, then it is called a witness–report (shahid).

Mutabi’ is a technical term that refers to a supporting/ corroborating narrator who also reports a Hadith from the same source as another narrator (who is

sometimes weak). However, when a chain of narrators has a defective narrator, a supporting narrator can lend enough strength (depending on the level of weakness) and allow the Hadith to be deemed reliable.

Investigating the various paths of transmission for the above-mentioned purposes is called the process of evaluation (i‘tibar).

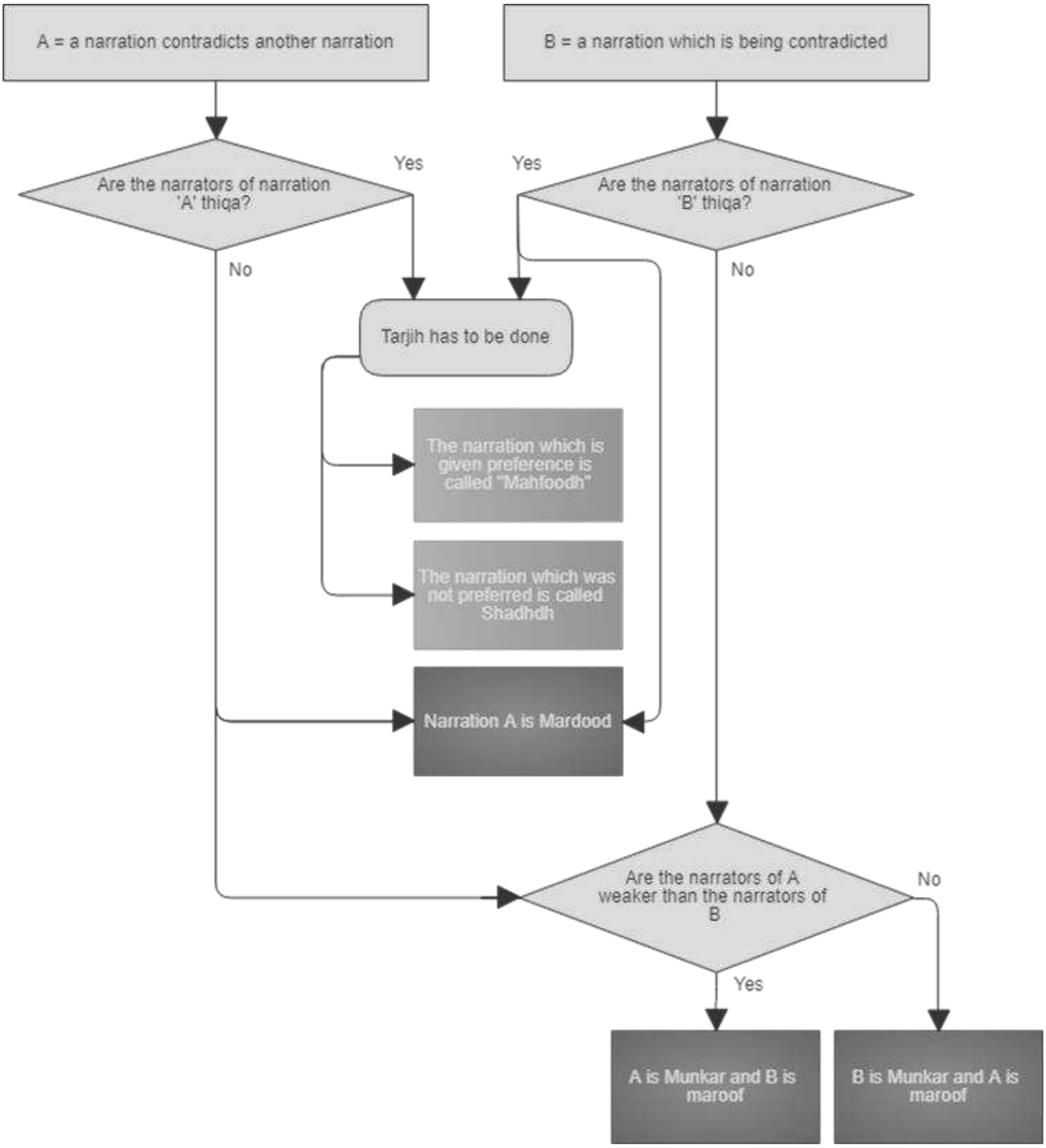

Figure 5: Classification of ahadith if there appears a contradiction

Regarding the reports classified as 'Maqbool':

ثُمَّ الْمَقْبُولُ: إِنْ سَلِمَ مِنَ الْمُعَارَضَةِ فَهُوَ الْمُحْكَمُ.

With regards to Maqbool: If it is safe from contradiction or objection (mu'aradha), then it is considered to be decisive (called 'muḥkam' – i.e. the rulings can be derived from it with confidence).

How to deal with any contradictions in narrations:

وَإِنْ عُورِضَ بِمِثْلِهِ: فَإِنْ أَمْكَنَ الْجَمْعُ فَمُخْتَلِفُ الْحَدِيثِ،

أَوْ لَا وثَبَتَ الْمُتَأَخِّرُ فَهُوَ النَّاسِخُ، وَالْآخَرُ الْمَنْسُوخُ.

وَإِلَّا فَالتَّرْجِيحُ، ثُمَّ التَّوَقُّفُ.

If it is contradicted by narration(s) that are as sound as this (then the following approach has to be adopted):

- if reconciliation (jam'; i.e. application of both the narrations) is possible (for some narrations), then such reports are called reconcilable reports (i.e. Mukhtaliful Hadith);
- if the reconciliation is not possible and the latter is well-established (thabit), then this (i.e. the latter one) is called Nasikh (i.e. the abrogating narration) and the other one is called Mansookh (i.e. abrogated).

Scholars have compiled voluminous books on the nasikh and mansookh in ahadith. Some of the renowned books on the topic are as follows:

- An-Nasikh Wa Al-Mansookh (by Imam Ahmed Ibn Hanbal)
- Nasikh Al-Hadith wa Mansukhahu (by Abu Bakr Muhammad Ibn Muhammad Athram)
- Tajreed Al-Ahadith Al-Mansookhah (by Imam Ibn Al-Jawzi)

- if the above is not possible, then one is given preference over the other (called the process of 'tarjeeh' or preference)
- and lastly, if neither (of the above is possible), then tawaqquf is adopted as the approach (i.e. such narrations are neither endorsed nor rejected but the scholars stay silent regarding them).

CHAPTER 5

Breakage in the Sanad

Mardood reports:

ثُمَّ الْمَرْدُودُ: إِمَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ لِسَقْطٍ أَوْ طَعْنٍ.

As far as the Mardood (rejected) report is considered, it can happen:

- Either due to Saqt (i.e. someone dropped from the chain)
- Or Ta'an (impugnment regarding a narrator; or factors affecting the soundness of the narrator)

In other words, the narration would be rejected either based on breakage in its chain or if there are any factors of Ta'an found in its narrators (or both). The current chapter deals with the breakage in the chain and the next one deals with the factors of ta'an or criticism of narrators.

Breakage in the chain can be of two types:

- Saqt Ad-Dhahiri: Clearly visible breakage (e.g. the narrator was not living in the era of the one who he is narrating from, or he did not meet him,

or he met him but did not study under him, or the shaykh did not permit him to narrate from him, and so on).

- Saqt Al-Khafi: This is the type of breakage that is not very apparent and only the experts of the science of hadith can identify this type of breakage.

Types of narration because of Saqt:

السقط

فَالسَّقْطُ: إِمَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ مِنْ مَبَادِئِ السَّنَدِ مِنْ أَوْ مِنْ آخِرِهِ بَعْدَ التَّابِعِيِّ، أَوْ غَيْرِ ذَلِكَ.

فَالْأَوَّلُ: الْمُعَلَّقُ. [قال ابن الصلاح إن وقع الحذف في كتاب التزمت صحته كالبخاري فما أتى فيه بالجزم دل على انه ثبت إسناده عنده وإنما حذف لغرض من الأغراض وما أتى فيه بغير الجزم ففيه مقال].

Saqt (i.e. someone dropped from the chain) will either be:

1. At the beginning of the chain (sanad) on the part of the compiler, or
2. At the end of the chain after the Successor (Tabi'i – i.e. students of the Companions), or
3. Elsewhere.

With regards to the first case: it is called a suspended report (muallaq).

Muallaq narration would either have one or a few narrators skipped from the chain above the mohadith or the whole chain would be missing.

With regards to the muallaq narrations, the following other possibilities also exist:

- Even if the compiler of the book that has the muallaq narrations say that the narrators that he has skipped are all thiqa (i.e. reliable), this would not take the narrations out of the category Mardood (rejected) as it is not known what conditions the author of the book set and if the conditions were fully met or not.
- If the muallaq narrations are found in a book whose author has very carefully picked the Saheeh traditions only (e.g Saheeh Bukhari), these ahadith might have come without the chain for brevity or other reasons (i.e. as headings). However, these narrations would still be considered weak unless their chains are identified and considered to be reliable.

In Saheeh Bukhari, Imam Bukhari has used various narrations for the purpose of heading for which he has not given the isnad. As those headings are 'muallaq' in nature, they are not considered to be authentic unless they appear elsewhere with reliable chains and meet other factors of authenticity.

وَالثَّانِي: هُوَ الْمُرْسَلُ.

With regards to the second case: it is called an expedient report (mursal).

Mursal narration is the one in which a Taabi'i (successor of the companions) says that 'The Prophet ﷺ said:..'.

There is a disagreement among scholars regarding the acceptability of Mursal narrations. It is because of the possibility that multiple names might have been skipped (e.g. the successors used to narrate from each other too and same was the case with companions; it means that if the links between the tabi'i and the Prophet ﷺ are not known, there is a possibility that up to 3 or 4 or more names might be missing). Some of the scholarly opinions regarding Mursal narrations are summarized below. These have been summarized from the discussion on this topic in the book 'An Introduction to Science of Hadith' by Shaykh Sohaib Hassan.

Outright rejection:

- Imam Ibn Hazm rejects the Mursal hadith outright; he says that the Mursal is unacceptable, whether it comes through Sa`id b. al-Musayyib or al-Hasan al-Basri or any other senior successors.

Partial or conditional Acceptance:

- According to an opinion, if it is known that there was only one companion present in the chain between the tabi'i and the Prophet ﷺ and the name of that companion is not mentioned in the isnad, the hadith is accepted as all companions are considered Adl and reliable.
- According to the second opinion, the Marasil (plural of Mursal) of elder Successors such as Sa`id b. al-Musayyab and `Ata' b. Abi Rabah are acceptable because all their Marasil, after investigation, are found to come through the Companions only. However, the Marasil of younger Successors are only acceptable if the names of their immediate

authorities are known through other sources; if not, they are rejected outright.

- Imam al-Shafi`i has discussed this issue in detail in his Al-Risalah and stipulated certain conditions that are required to be met before a Mursal narration can be accepted e.g. the report being found or corroborated through another reliable chain. He only accepts Mursal ahadith from the senior successor (e.g. Sa`id b. al-Musayyab) when the narration meets the criteria set by him.
- Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal accepts Mursal and (other) Da`if (weak) ahadith if nothing opposing them is found regarding a particular issue, and he prefers them over qiyas (analogical deduction). The Daif in this context means the ahadith which are not severely weak (including the ones that might have Irsal), i.e. they are not fabricated or Munkar. It is to be noted that Imam Ahmed did not classify the ahadith into the commonly known three-tier classification comprising of Saheeh, Hassan, and Daif; he, rather, classified them in Saheeh and Daif and hence what he classified as Daif might be stronger in the view of other scholars of hadith.
- Imam Abu Dawud accepts the Mursal under two conditions: a) no Musnad (connected) hadith is found regarding that issue; and b) if a Musnad hadith is found, it is not contradicted by the Mursal hadith.
- Imam Al-Hakim An-Nisaburi is extremely reluctant to accept the Mursal hadith except in the case of elder Successors.
- Imam Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi strongly supports the view of those who reject the Mursal except if it comes through an elder Successor.
- Imam Ibn al-Salah (d. 643) agrees with al-Shafi`i in rejecting the Mursal hadith unless it is proven to have come through a Musnad route.

- Imam Ibn Taimiyyah classifies Mursal into three categories. He says, "There are some acceptable, others unacceptable, and some which require further investigation: if it is known that the reporter does so (i.e. narrates by Irsal) from reliable authorities, then his report will be accepted; if he does so from both classes of authorities, i.e. reliable and unreliable, we shall not accept his narration (on its own, without further investigation), for he is narrating from someone whose reliability is unknown; all such Mursal ahadith which go against the reports made by reliable authorities will be rejected completely."
- Imam Al-Dhahabi (d. 748) regards the Mursal of younger Successors such as al-Hasan al-Basri, al- Zuhri, Qatadah, and Humaid al-Tawil as the weakest type of Mursal.

Acceptance without any investigation or conditions:

- According to another opinion, the Marasil of Successors and those who report from them are acceptable without any investigation at all. This opinion is supported by the Kufi school of mohaditheen; however other groups of scholars do not agree with this. Some of the scholars who hold the opinion regarding the acceptance of such narrations are as follows.
- The opinion held by Imam Malik and all Maliki jurists is that the Mursal of a trustworthy person is valid as proof and as justification for a practice, just like a Musnad hadith. In some cases, they give preference to Mursal narrations over Musnad (i.e. the narrations with the connected chains).
- Imam Abu Hanifah holds the same opinion as Imam Malik; he accepts the Mursal Hadith whether or not it is supported by another hadith.

Other positions:

- Imam Ibn Abi Hatim does not give a specific opinion about the Mursal hadith. However, he did collect an anthology of 469 reporters of hadith, including four female reporters, whose narratives were subjected to criticism due to Irsal (i.e. skipping some narrator above him). This collection is known as Kitab al-Marasil.

وَالثَّالِثُ: إِنْ كَانَ بِاثْنَيْنِ فَصَاعِدًا مَعَ التَّوَالِي فَهُوَ الْمُعْضَلُ، وَإِلَّا فَالْمُنْقَطِعُ. ثُمَّ قَدْ يَكُونُ وَاضِحًا أَوْ خَفِيًّا.

With regards to the third case:

(There can be two possible situations which are as follows; they are also explained in figure 6)

- If the saqt consists of two or more narrators consecutively then it is the problematic report (mu'dhal),
- If the above is not the case, then it is called a broken–chained report (munqat'e).

The saqt can either be:

1. Obvious, or
2. Hidden.

(These two types of saqt are explained below.)

Reasons for Saqt:

فَالْأَوَّلُ: يُدْرَكُ بِعَدَمِ التَّلَاقِي، وَمِنْ ثَمَّ احْتِيجَ إِلَى التَّأْرِيخِ.

The first is recognized by lack of meeting (between interconnected reporters in the chain; i.e. when there is no proof or evidence that one narrator heard from the one above him in the chain, then the saqt is considered to have happened). Hence, there is a need for the (biographical) history (so that it can be identified who met who and who didn't and then this information can be used in identifying the saqt).

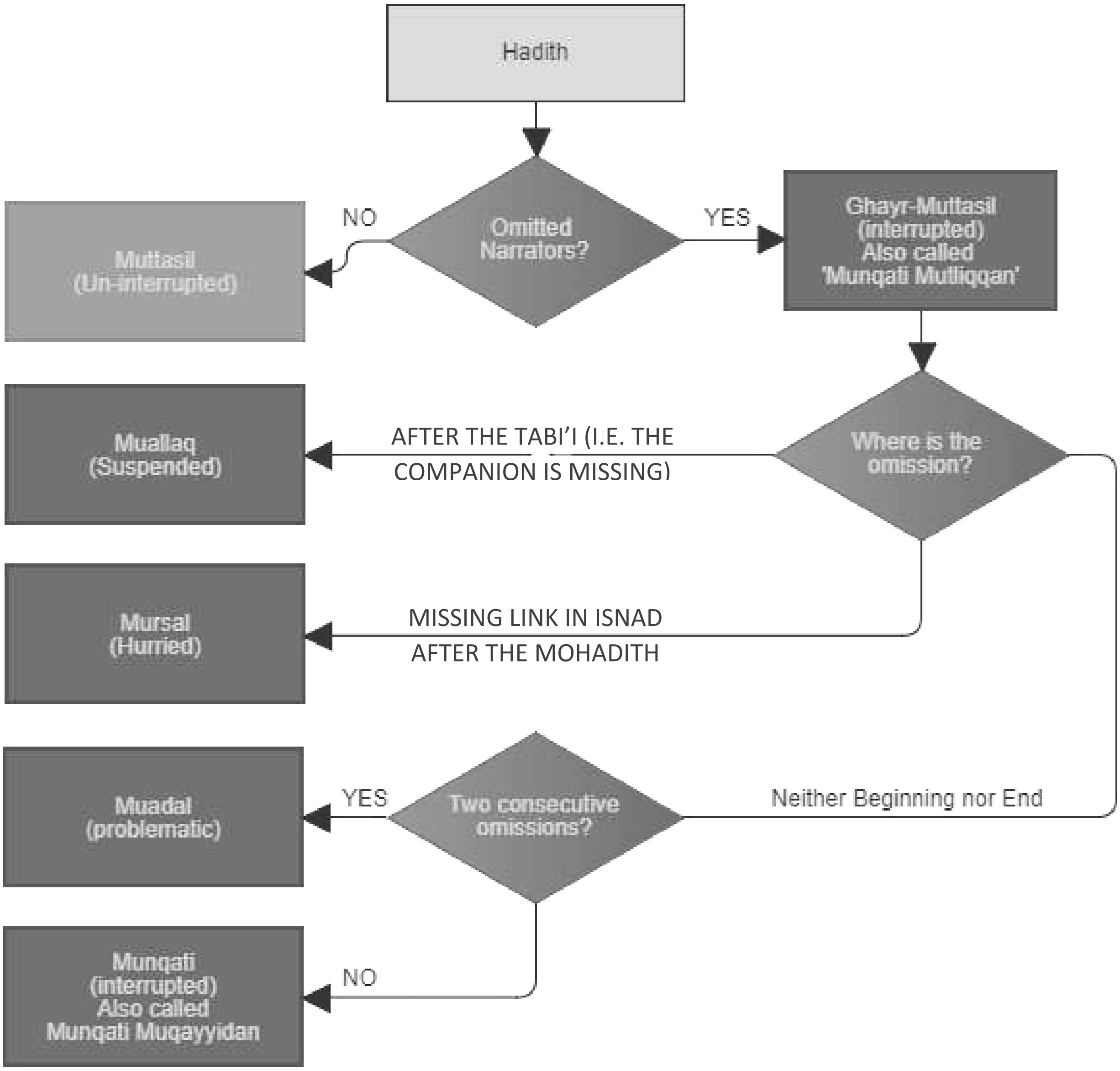

Figure 6: Types of narrations according to the connectivity of chain

والثاني: المدلس ويرد بصيغة تحتمل اللقي: كعن، وقال، وكذا المرسل الخفي، من معاصر لم يلق من حدث عنه.

The second is the camouflaged report (mudallas), i.e. a report that comes with such wording that might imply that the narrator met with the one who he is reporting from (whereas he actually did not meet him or took the hadith from him). For example, the word 'Un' (meaning 'from', e.g. the chain mentioning 'from so and so', rather than the more explicit statements such as 'I heard from so and so' or 'so and so narrated to me' etc.), or 'qala' (meaning 'he said' without explaining to whom he said that) and so on.

Likewise, the hidden expedient report (mursal khafi) is the report that a narrator narrates from one of his contemporaries that he did not meet (or, met but he did not narrate any hadith to him; or he met him when he was a baby).

The opinion of scholars regarding the acceptability or rejection of Muddalas is as follows:

- Imam Ibn as-Salaah said, "The ruling is that the only narration of a Mudallis that will be accepted is the one in which he clarifies who he heard it from, and this is for everyone including those who only did the Tadlees once."
- Imam Nawawi said, "If a Mudallis narrates with 'An (i.e. from so and so), in that case, such a narration will not be considered a proof (in the matter of religion) according to consensus of scholars."
- Imam Ali ibn Madeeni was asked about the narration of one who commits tadlees. He said: "If his tadlees is dominant (i.e. he does that

very frequently) then his narration is accepted only along with the affirmation of his hearing". This shows that the one who doesn't commit tadlees often (qaleelan) or usually, then his narration with `an are accepted except in a condition when it is proven that he has actually committed tadlees.

- Another point to be noted here is what Hafidh ibn Rajab al-Hanbali said: "One who commits tadlees with regards to his (specific or well known) shaykh then (despite this) his narrations from others will be taken in a connected form (without the accusation or doubt of tadlees)

CHAPTER 6

Factors for the evaluation of narrators

Factors considered for Ta'an:

ثُمَّ الطَّعْنُ: إِمَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ لِكَذِبِ الرَّاوِي، أَوْ تُهْمَتِهِ بِذَلِكَ، أَوْ فُحْشِ غَلَطِهِ، أَوْ غَفْلَتِهِ،

أَوْ فِسْقِهِ، أَوْ وَهْمِهِ، أَوْ مُخَالَفَتِهِ، أَوْ جَهَالَتِهِ، أَوْ بِدْعَتِهِ، أَوْ سُوءِ حِفْظِهِ.

With regards to Ta'an, it can happen:

1. If a narrator is proven to have lied, or
2. There are claims about him that he lied, or
3. If he does big mistakes, or
4. If he is careless, or
5. If he is a fasiq (e.g. involved in sins), or
6. If he has much wahm (i.e. delusion, or excessive confusion), or
7. If he does mukhalafa (i.e. contradicts sound narrators)
8. If his situation is not known (i.e. the narrator is majhool), or
9. If he does innovation (Bid'ah), or
10. If he has a poor memory (soo al-hifdh).

Figure 7: Reasons for Ta'an or criticism of narrators

Mawdoo, Munkar, and Matrook narrations:

فَالْأَوَّلُ: الْمَوْضُوعُ وَالثَّانِي: الْمَتْرُوكُ.

The first one (i.e. the narration having a person in the chain who is proven to be a liar) is called 'Mawdoo' (fabricated report).

> Mawdoo narrations are those which have in their chain one or more narrators that are proven to have lied in the matter of hadith.
>
> Imam Suyuti explains about Mawdoo narrations in Tadreeb ur Rawi (1/161):

Neither it is halal (or permissible) to quote a fabricated narration nor is it suitable to act upon it. One may only quote a Hadith of this nature if he also explains that it is a fabrication.

One should therefore be very cautious about Mawdoo narrations.

Some people in our times and times before us have got misguided because of the presence of Mawdoo narrations in the collection of ahadith. When they saw that some of the narrations are fabricated, they denounced the whole hadith literature. This approach is against common sense. If some food is found to be unhealthy, it would only suit a person of no intellect to denounce eating any form of food at all. What a wise man, or for that matter any person that has got any thinking ability at all, would do would be to separate the good from the bad and then consume what is good. The same is the approach of the people of knowledge about the hadith literature. What is fabricated has been sieved out by the hadith scholar through a rigorous process of authentication that was done with matchless diligence and very thorough research; some of the principles involved in this process are elaborated in this book already. The criteria set by the mohaditheen and their detailed research ensured that the authentic is segregated from the inauthentic.

The second one (i.e. a narration narrated by a person who is accused of lying) is called matrook (discarded report)

Matrook is the term used for those narrations which have in their chain one or more narrators that could have possibly lied in the matter of hadith. These people are proven to have lied in the matters of Dunya but not proven to have

lied in the matter of the deen; however, because of their habit of lying, it is suspected that they would have lied in the matter of religion too.

وَالثَّالِثُ: الْمُنْكَرُ عَلَى رَأْيٍ. وَكَذَا الرَّابِعُ وَالْخَامِسُ.

The third one (i.e. a narration with a narrator in its chain who does major mistakes in his narrations) is called Munkar (disclaimed report) according to one opinion, and so is the case with the fourth (i.e. a narration having a careless person in the chain) and fifth one (i.e. a narration having a person in the chain who engages in majors sins such as riba, adultery, and so on).

Muallal Hadith – narrated by doubtful narrators:

الوهم

ثُمَّ الْوَهْمُ: إِنِ اطُّلِعَ عَلَيْهِ بِالْقَرَائِنِ، وَجَمْعِ الطُّرُقِ: فَالْمُعَلَّلُ.

When delusion (wahm) is discovered in a report through external indications and the gathering (and analysis of) the paths of transmission, then such a report is called a defective report (muallal).

Illa (from which the word Mu’allal is formed) means a hidden defamatory defect; it appears mostly in the Isnad but can also occur in Matn.

Muallal narration is the narration from a narrator who, because of confusion (Wahm), mixes the Isnad (and hence the authenticity of the narration is compromised), or the matn (and hence brings together unrelated aspect from different narrations) and so on. Identification of Muallal narrations requires a

thorough study and research. Only the most expert scholars of hadith are blessed to be able to perform this task for the ummah.

Mudraj narrations:

ثُمَّ الْمُخَالَفَةُ:

- إِنْ كَانَتْ بِتَغْيِيرِ السِّيَاقِ: فَمُدْرَجُ الْإِسْنَادِ.
- أَوْ بِدَمْجِ مَوْقُوفٍ بِمَرْفُوعٍ: فَمُدْرَجُ الْمَتْنِ.
- أَوْ بِتَقْدِيمٍ أَوْ تَأْخِيرٍ: فَالْمَقْلُوبُ.
- أَوْ بِزِيَادَةِ رَاوٍ: فَالْمَزِيدُ فِي مُتَّصِلِ الْأَسَانِيدِ.
- أَوْ بِإِبْدَالِهِ وَلَا مُرَجِّحَ: فَالْمُضْطَّرِبُ – وَقَدْ يَقَعُ الْإِبْدَالُ عَمْدًا امْتِحَانًا – أَوْ بِتَغْيِيرٍ مَعَ بَقَاءِ لسِّيَاقِ: فَالْمُصَحَّفُ وَالْمُحَرَّفُ.

As for contradicting others (mukhalafa), if it results from:

- An alteration to the chain of narration; if this is the case, the report is termed Mudraj[14] al-lsnad, (or "Insertion into the Chain of Narration" – it can happen due to various reasons e.g. ‘a narrator mixing various chains through which a narration reached him’, or ‘if a narration reaches a narrator from multiple routes and he only mentions one of the chains

[14] Mudraj means something that is entered upon

when he is partially or fully presenting the content of both the narrations that reached him); or

- Mixing a mawqoof narration (i.e. one which stops at the Companions and doesn’t go all the way to the Prophet ﷺ) with a marfu narration (i.e. a narration whose chain goes all the way up to the Prophet ﷺ); if this is the case, the report is called Mudraj al-Matn, (or "Insertion into the Text of the Narration”; this type of narration is also defined as “a report which has something added to its text which is not from it, and this has happened in a way that the two are not separated by any means. For example, if the report contains the words of the Prophet ﷺ mixed with the words of companions or the mohadith”.); or
- Advancing or delaying something; if this is the case, the report is termed al-Maqlub (or "Inversion"; i.e. either the names of narrators in the chain are mixed up or some content in the hadith is mixed up, e.g. left is mentioned as right and vice versa); or
- An addition of a narrator (in the chain either by mistake or intentionally); if this is the case, the report is termed al-Mazeedu fi Mutassil al-Asaneed, (i.e. the "Addition for the purpose of connecting the chain of narration”); or
- Exchanging one chain for another while the exchanged chain is not stronger than the original chain; if this is the case, the report is termed al-Mudtarib, or "Confused". (It is to be noted that this confusion can either happen in the chain or the Matn. One of the examples of Idhtirab in matn is the narration mentioned by Imam Tirmidhi in which it is reported that ‘there are rights [of people] in [your] wealth, other than the zakaah too. In Sunan Ibn Majah, this narration is mentioned from the same chain, however, the word ‘inna’ [there is; indeed] is replaced by ‘laysa’ [there is

not]. This completely changes the meaning of the narration and the two reports are considered to have Idhtirab. Accordingly, a deeper study is done by the hadith scholars to identify which of the two is correct and which is a mistake); or

- Alteration despite the remaining integrity of the chain; if this is the case, the report is termed al-Musahhaf (i.e. "Misspelling" in Dots, e.g. Ibn Madhahim getting mentioned as Ibn Marajim, etc.), or al-Muharraf (i.e. "Misspelling" in vowels).

It is to be noted that not all the ahadith are reported in the exact same wording. The scholars of hadith explain that many of the narrations are reported in their meaning and not the exact wording. The evidence of permissibility to do that is the command of the Prophet ﷺ in the sermon of his final hajj in which he asked that everyone present should convey to those who are not present. The scholars explain that it also included those who did not understand Arabic and hence conveying in one's own words would therefore be deemed as permissible for the non-Arabs or to a non-Arab audience by consensus of scholars. This is called conveying a narration Bil-Ma'ana (by the meaning and not the exact words). Other groups of scholars also permitted it (i.e. riwayah bil Ma'ana) for those Arab scholars who might have forgotten the actual words but remembered fully the meaning and had proficiency with alternate words that could convey the same meaning. Similarly, the scholars also allow abridging the ahadith or mentioning a portion of them if doing so does not affect the integrity of the words of the Prophet ﷺ. However, one should be extremely careful with the wording of the narrations as deliberately lying about the Prophet ﷺ is like purchasing a seat for one's self in the hellfire.

A very good practice in this regard is to say: اَوْ كَمَا قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّي اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَسَلَّم meaning ('Or as the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, may Allah's blessing and peace be upon him') after mentioning a narration to make up for any possible differences in the wording said by the narrator and the actual words of the Prophet ﷺ.

وَلَا يَجُوزُ تَعَمُّدُ تَغْيِيرِ الْمَتْنِ بِالنَّقْصِ وَالْمُرَادِفِ إِلَّا لِعَالِمٍ بِمَا يُحِيلُ الْمَعَانِي فَإِنْ خَفِيَ الْمَعْنَى احْتِيجَ إِلَى شَرْحِ الْغَرِيبِ وَبَيَانِ الْمُشْكِلِ.

It is not permissible to intentionally alter a text by removing a part of it or using synonyms except for the one who is knowledgeable about what impedes the meaning, and the word whose meanings are not clear and hence they require an explanation and clarification of unusual and difficult terms.

The scholars have written various books on explaining the difficult terms or less—commonly used words in ahadith, e.g. An-Nihaya Fi Ghareeb Al-Hadith Wal-Athar – by Mohadith Ibn Atheer Jazri; AD-Dur An-Natheer – by Allama Jalal Ad-Din Suyuti, etc

Anonymity of the narrators:

الجهالة

ثُمَّ الْجَهَالَةُ: وَسَبَبُهَا أَنَّ الرَّاوِيَ قَدْ تَكْثُرُ نُعُوتُهُ فَيُذْكَرُ بِغَيْرِ مَا اشْتُهِرَ بِهِ لِغَرَضٍ، وَصَنَّفُوا فِيهِ **الْمُوَضِّحَ**.

With regards to Al-Jahalah, or Anonymity (of the narrator; i.e. the narrator or his attributes are not recognized), this happens when:

- A narrator has a large number of titles/epithets; and
- He is mentioned (in a narration) by one of them that he is not famous for (e.g. the narrator Muhammad Ibn As-Saib Al-Kalbi مُحَمَّد بن السَّائِب الْكَلْبِيّ is mentioned by various kunyas e.g. Abu Hisham, Abu Mundhir, and Abu Saeed; he is sometimes mentioned in relation to his grandfather Muhammad Ibn Nadhar, and so on. It seems as if they are names of different people but in reality, it is one person; there are many other examples like this); and
- This is done for a reason.

They (i.e. the scholars of hadith) have compiled works dealing with this matter. These (books) are called al-Muwa'ddih (meaning "the ones that make things clearer" so that any Juhl or lack of knowledge about the narrators due to their various names or titles can be removed).

وَقَدْ يَكُونُ مُقِلًّا فَلَا يَكْثُرُ الأَخْذُ عَنْهُ، وَصَنَّفُوا فِيهِ **الوِحْدَانَ**

(Another cause is that) the narrator has narrated only a few (narrations) and is not frequently taken from. (As not many people have taken the ahadith from him, only limited knowledge is available about the narrator). Concerning this, they (the scholars of hadith) wrote the books about the narrators who appear in a single chain only (called 'al-Wiḥdan').

ولَا يُسَمَّى اخْتِصارًا، وَفِيهِ **المُبْهَمَاتُ**،

(Another possible reason for Juhl or anonymity could be that a narrator) may have been left unnamed (properly) out of brevity (of the sanad and might have been mentioned with the words like ‘a shaykh told me..’ or ‘a man told me..’). Concerning this they (i.e. the scholars of hadith compiled books on) the anonymous mentions (called ‘Al-Mubhamat’).

وَلَا يُقْبَلُ المبْهَمُ وَلَوْ أُبْهِمَ بِلَفْظِ التَّعْدِيلِ عَلَى الْأَصَّحِ.

The anonymous narrator (mubham) is not accepted, even if he is mentioned anonymously with a grading of commendation (ta’deel); this is according to the soundest opinion in this regard.

فَإِنْ سُمِّيَ وَانْفَرَدَ وَاحِدٌ عَنْهُ فمَجْهُولُ الْعَيْنِ،

أَوِ اثْنَانِ فَصَاعِدًا، وَلَمْ يُوَثَّقْ: فَمَجْهُولُ الحَالِ، وَهُوَ الْمَسْتُورُ.

If the narrator is mentioned in the chain AND:

- Only one person related from him, then he is a completely unidentifiable reporter (majhool al- ‘ayn).
- If two or more related from him and he is not (explicitly) declared reliable, then he is a reporter of ‘unknown status’ (majhool al-ḥal); and that is also what is called ‘the veiled reporter’ (mastur).

Regarding the narrations from innovators in religion:

ثُمَّ الْبِدْعَةُ: إِمَّا بِمُكَفِّرٍ، أَوْ بِمُفَسِّقٍ.

فَالْأَوَّلُ: لَا يَقْبَلُ صَاحِبَهَا الْجُمْهُورُ [والتحقيق أنه لا يرد كل مكفر ببدعته لأن كل طائفة تدعى أن مخالفيها مبتدعة وقد تبالغ فتكفر مخالفها فالمعتمد — أن الذي ترد روايته من أنكر أثرا متواترا من الشرع معلوما من الدين بالضرورة وكذا من اعتقد عكسه].

والثاني: يقبل من لم يكن داعية إلى بدعته في الأصح، إلا إن روى ما يقوي بدعته فيرد على المختار، وبه صرح الجوزقاني شيخ النسائي.

With regards to Bid'ah, it can either be,

1. Tantamount to apostasy, or
2. Tantamount to moral corruption.

As for the first: The vast majority (of hadith scholars) do not accept from any narrator described with such attributes.

As for the second: Someone who is not inviting people to it (i.e. his bid'ah), his report is accepted according to the soundest opinion, unless he narrates something supporting his innovation. In that case, he is rejected and that is the preferred position of the hadith scholars. This is what al-Nasa'i's shaykh, al-Juzajani, explicitly said.

Types of poor memory:

سوء الحفظ

ثُمَّ سُوءُ الْحِفْظِ:

- إِنْ كَانَ لَازِمًا فَهُوَ الشَّاذُّ عَلَى رَأْيٍ،
- أَوْ طَارِئًا فَالْمُخْتَلِطُ،

Poor memory: If it is:

- Chronic (called Soo Al-Hifdh Al-Lazim), then it (i.e. the report or narration from such a transmitter) is called the anomalous report (shadhdh) according to one opinion (and such reports are rejected).
- Occasional (called Soo Al-Hifdh At-Tari – e,g. if it happens in the old age while in the young age the narrator was thiqa or reliable, or if it happens because of loss of books and before the loss of books the narrator was reliable in his reading and narrating from the book, and so on), then (such a narration is called) the jumbled report (i.e. mukhtalat, and it can be accepted when it is ascertained that it was narrated before the loss of dhabt happened).

When do the narrations from chronically forgetful narrators become acceptable?

وَمَتَى تُوبِعَ سَيْئُ الْحِفْظِ بِمُعْتَبَرٍ، وَكَذَا الْمَسْتُورُ وَالْمُرْسَلُ، وَالْمُدلَّسُ: صَارَ حَدِيثُهُمْ حَسَنًا لَا لِذَاتِهِ، بَلْ بِالْمَجْمُوعِ.

Whenever a chronically forgetful reporter is corroborated by a worthy report (i.e. a narration worthy of consideration), or like-wise a report from a veiled reporter

(mastur, i.e. whose condition is unknown or hidden), the expedited report (mursal), or the camouflaged report (mudallas), then such a narration from the forgetful narrators attains the status of Hassan report as a combination (or group of narrations as they all reinforce the same point) and not as the individual narration by itself.

It is to be noted that the ahadith in this category are those whose weakness rested in the Dhabt rather than the Adl of the narrators or the breakage of the chain.

The scholars explain four ways in which a Daif (weak) narration can become Hassan:

- If a corroborating narration is found to corroborate the narration of a narrator who had problems with his memory, and it happens so that the corroborating narrator is either stronger or of similar strength as the forgetful narrator
- If a hadith had a narrator who had a narrator in the chain that was Mastur (i.e. hidden or not known), and an acceptable narrator is found that corroborates the hadith
- If a hadith had tadlees in it (i.e. some narrators were skipped) and a corroborating narration is found from acceptable narrators
- When an acceptable corroborating narration is found for a Mursal hadith

CHAPTER 7

Categories of hadith according to how far up the chain goes

This chapter explains various types of narrations according to level or elevation up to which their chains reach. Three important categories of hadith are mentioned below.

Different possibilities for the Isnad regarding how far up they go

الاسناد

ثُمَّ الْإِسْنَادُ: إِمَّا أَنْ يَنْتَهِيَ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ -صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ-، تَصْرِيحًا، أَوْ حُكْمًا: مِنْ قَوْلِهِ، أَوْ فِعْلِهِ، أَوْ تَقْرِيرِهِ.

أَوْ إِلَى الصَّحَابِيِّ كَذَلِكَ وَهُوَ: مَنْ لَقِيَ النَّبِيَّ -صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ- مُؤْمِنًا بِهِ، وَمَاتَ عَلَى الْإِسْلَامِ، وَلَوْ تَخَلَّلَتْ رِدَّةٌ فِي الْأَصَحِّ.

أَوْ إِلَى التَّابِعِيّ: وَهُوَ مَنْ لَقِيَ الصَّحَابِيَّ كَذَلِكَ.

- فَالْأَوَّلُ: الْمَرْفُوعُ ،
- وَالثَّانِي: الْمَوْقُوفُ،
- وَالثَّالِثُ: الْمَقْطُوعُ ،

وَمَنْ دُونَ التَّابِعِيّ فِيهِ مِثْلُهُ. وَيُقَالُ لِلأَخِيرَيْنِ: الْأَثَرُ.

The chain's ascription (isnad) explicitly (*Tasreehan*) or implicitly (*Hukman*) goes to:

1. The Prophet ﷺ: i.e. consisting in his statements, or his actions, or his tacit approval[15]
2. A Companion, in the same manner as above (i.e. statements, actions, or tacit approvals): i.e. it goes to someone who met with Prophet ﷺ as a believer in him and died as a Muslim, even if his Islam was interrupted by apostasy [in between]; this is the strongest opinion.
3. A Successor, in the like manner: i.e. it goes to someone who met with one of the Companions (with the conditions of belief mentioned above).

[15] Tacit approval means that something was done or said in the presence of the Prophet ﷺ and he did not object to it.

Marfu narrations:

The first is called the Marfu (i.e. the narration whose chain goes up to the Prophet ﷺ; this is also called the Prophetic ﷺ report or Prophetic ﷺ tradition).

Mawqoof narrations:

The second is called the Mawquf (i.e. a narration with a halted chain; or a narration whose chain goes up to a companion rather than to the Prophet ﷺ).

Maqtu narrations:

The third is called the Maqtu (i.e. a narration with a severed chain; or a narration whose chain goes to a successor rather than the Prophet ﷺ or a companion).

The same term is also used for the reports that go to anyone subsequent to the Successors.

The last two are said to be athar.

Explanation of the term Athar:

Linguistically, *Athar* (Plural: Athaar) means something that is left of the traces of something and the remains of the past people. It is also used for the aspects that indicate what happened in the past. The word is also used to depict the meaning of ‘impact’ left by something.

Islamically, one group of mohaditheen uses this word as a synonym for hadith; while the other group, as Imam Ibn Hajr mentions, uses this term to express what has been narrated from the successors and those who came after them.

Hadith Qudsi:

If the chain goes even beyond the Prophet ﷺ and he explains what Allah swt says, it is called hadith al-Qudsi.

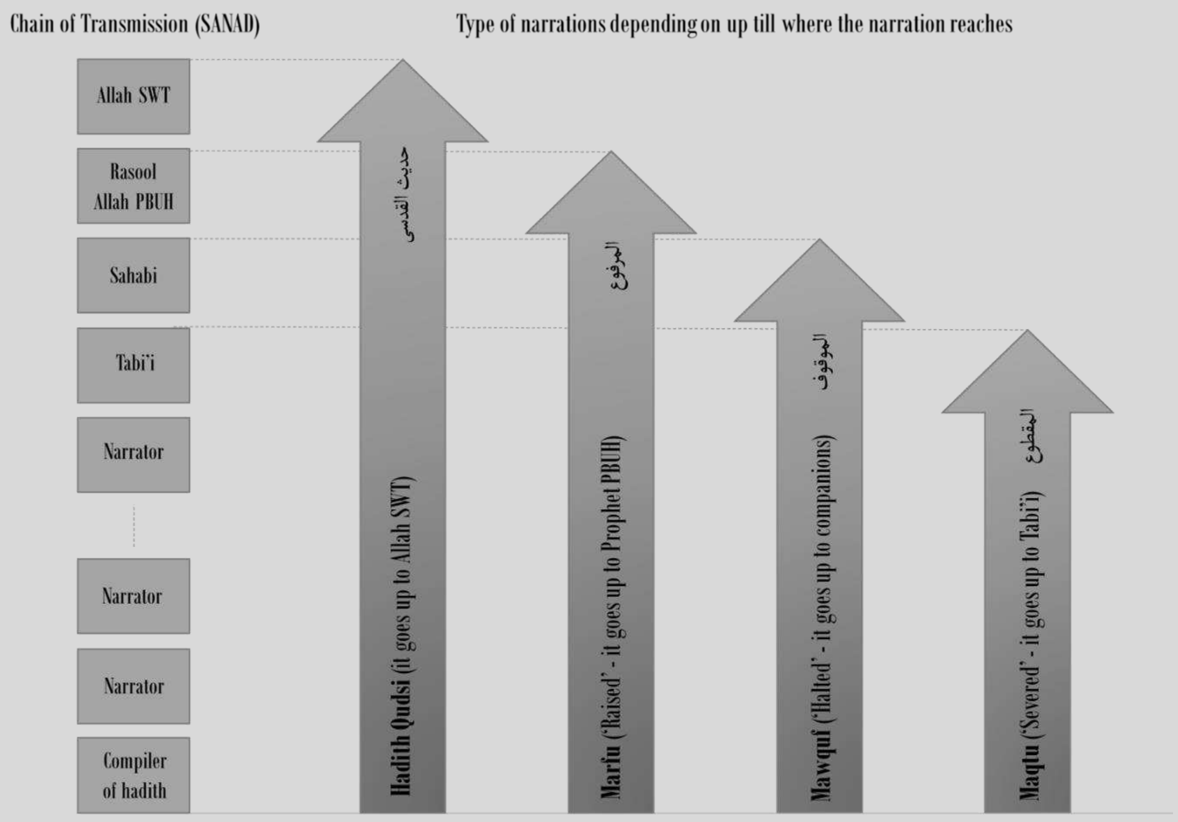

Figure 8: Types of narrations according to how far up their sanad (chain of narrators) reach

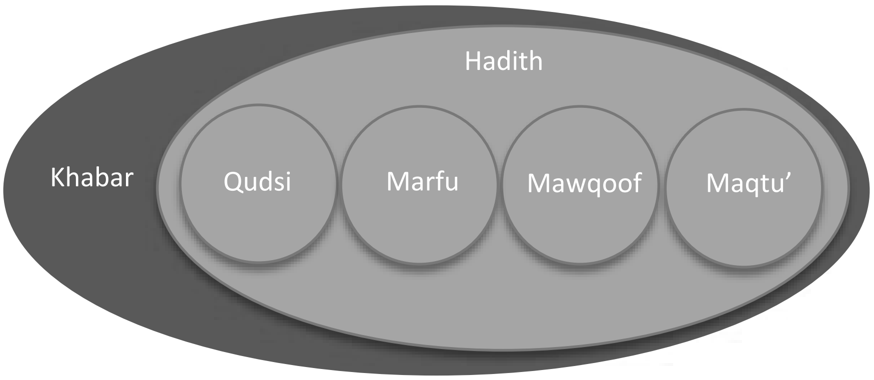

Figure 9: Relationship between Khabar and types of ahadith

CHAPTER 8

Attribution in the chains of narration

Musnad reports:

وَالْمُسْنَدُ: مَرْفُوعُ صَحَابِيٍّ بِسَنَدٍ ظَاهِرُهُ الْاتِّصَالُ.

Musnad Report: The term 'Musnad' is used for a Marfu report from a companion (i.e. in the chain, a companion attributes it to the Prophet ﷺ and not a successor) that has a chain which is visibly connected.

In other words, the term Musnad is used for a report that goes to the Prophet ﷺ i.e. it is Marfu and there is no apparent breakage in the chain.

The word visible or apparent is used to express the point that the concern here is the apparent and clear breakage in the chain; there still might be a possibility of a hidden disconnection, e.g. when a narrator says, 'from so on so'. With the use of this ambiguous way to convey a narration, there can be a possibility that the narrator did not actually meet and receive the hadith from the one he is narrating from. However, ahadith with such wording are also included in the Musnad ahadith as this method of conveying the hadith

does not fall under the category of 'visible' disconnection in the chain. This aspect, i.e. words used in conveying the hadith, is elaborated further in the next chapter.

It is to be noted that there is some difference of opinion in how various mohaditheen define the term Musnad. For example, according to Imam Khateeb Al-Baghdadi, an unbroken chain is Musnad even if it is not marfu.

Uluw in Isnad and its types:

فَإِنْ قَلَّ عَدَدُهُ:

- إِمَّا أَنْ يَنْتَهِيَ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ –صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ–،
- أَوْ إِلَى إِمَامٍ ذِي صِفَةٍ عَلِيَّةٍ كَشُعْبَةَ.

فَالْأَوَّلُ: الْعُلُوُّ الْمُطْلَقُ. وَالثَّانِي: النِّسْبِيُّ.

If:

- there are fewer narrators in a sanad, and the chain goes up to the Prophet ﷺ, OR
- if the chain includes any high-ranking Imams e.g. Shu'bah (and the shortest path to that Imam is achieved in a sanad);

then:

- the former is called 'Uluw Al-Mutlaq, and
- the latter is called 'Uluw Nisbi.

The term ‘Uluw means elevation or superiority. Note the definition of some of the relevant terms below:

- The narration that has the Uluw is called Aali.
- Its opposite is Naazil.
- If the two chains have got the same level of Uluw, they are called Masawi.

The shorter the chain of a hadith, the lesser is the probability of error in it if its narrators are sound. It has therefore remained a preference of the scholars of hadith to gain Isnad for the ahadith that are shorter i.e. fewer links between them and the Prophet ﷺ. For this reason, the scholars of hadith used to travel to, and still continue to do so, faraway lands where they knew was a scholar or mohadith with a shorter chain to the Prophet ﷺ so that they could gain the sanad from him.

Imam Ibn Hajr has explained two types of ‘Uluw.

- One is considered to be elevated or superior because of fewer links between the carrier of the hadith or the mohadith and the Prophet ﷺ.
- The second type is that in which fewer links are there between a great Imam of hadith and the carrier or mohadith narrating it. Because of the fewer links between the narrator and the great Imam whose righteousness, the memory of hadith and other aspects were of very high caliber, the hadith is considered to have ‘uluw (i.e. superiority).

After this, Imam Ibn Hajr further explains the different levels of Uluw and the terms used for them.

Methods of Uluw:

وَفِيهِ الْمُوَافَقَةُ: وَهِيَ الْوُصُولُ إِلَى شَيْخِ أَحَدِ الْمُصَنِّفِينَ مِنْ غَيْرِ طَرِيقِهِ.

وَفِيهِ الْبَدَلُ: وَهُوَ الْوُصُولُ إِلَى شَيْخِ شَيْخِهِ كَذَلِكَ.

وَفِيهِ الْمُسَاوَاةُ: وَهِيَ اسْتِوَاءُ عَدَدِ الْإِسْنَادِ مِنَ الرَّاوِي إِلَى آخِرِهِ [آخر —— الإسناد]، مَعَ إِسْنَادِ أَحَدِ الْمُصَنِّفِينَ.

وفيه المصافحة: وهي الاستواء مع تلميذ ذلك المصنف.

It (i.e. 'Uluw An-Nisbee) includes (four methods of getting closeness to the Imams of hadith):

- **Muwafaqa** (i.e. concurrent or parallel chain) which arrives at the shaykh of one of the compilers of hadith from a chain that is different from that of the compiler
- **Badal** (i.e. convergent chain) which arrives at the shaykh's shaykh (of the compiler) in the same way (i.e. the teacher of the teacher of one of the compilers of hadith collections);
- **Musawat** (parity or equivalence of chain) which is the number of narrator-links in the chain from the narrator to the end equalling (the length of) the chains of one of the compilers (i.e. reporting a hadith from a chain which has got the same number of narrators in that chain as one of the great compilers of hadith – such chains are called 'Masawi or equal);

- **Musafaha** (meaning hand-shaking) in which one's chain equates to the chain of a student of the compilers of hadith

Methods of Nuzool:

ويقابل العلو بأقسامه النزول

Descent (nuzool) is opposite to elevation ('uluw) in all of its categories (i.e. as there are levels of Uluw based on the above factors, there are corresponding levels of nuzool too).

فَإِنْ تَشَارَكَ الرَّاوِي وَمَنْ رَوَى عَنْهُ فِي السِّنِّ وَاللُّقِيِّ فَهُوَ الْأَقْرَانُ.

كُلٌّ مِنْهُمَا عَنِ الْآخَرِ: فَالْمُدْبَجُ،

وَإِنْ رَوَى عَمَّنْ دُونَهُ: فَالْأَكَابِرُ عَنِ الْأَصَاغِرِ،

وَمِنْهُ الْآبَاءُ عَنِ الْأَبْنَاءِ، وَفِي عَكْسِهِ كَثْرَةٌ، وَمِنْهُ مَنْ رَوَى عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ جَدِّهِ.

If the narrator is of the same age as the one who he narrates from and they have met, then this is called Aqraan (i.e. narration from peers)

If each of them related from each other then it is called Mud'dabijj (i.e. reciprocal narration).

If he relates from other than the above who is younger than himself, then this type of narration is called 'Al-Akabiru An Al-Asaghir (i.e. elders narrating from those younger than them).

Its example includes fathers narrating from their sons.

The situation opposite to it is more common (i.e. youngers narrating from the elders).

Its example includes: a son narrating from his father (which comes with the wording 'Un Abeehi) or his grandfather (which comes with the wording 'Un Jaddihi).

Some other important terms with regards to mutual relation between the subsequent narrators:

وَإِنِ اشْتَرَكَ اثْنَانِ عَنْ شَيْخٍ، وَتَقدَّمَ مَوْتُ أَحَدِهِمَا، فَهُوَ: السَّابِقُ وَاللَّاحِقُ .

وَإِنْ رَوَى عَنْ اثْنَيْنِ مُتَّفِقِي الْاسْمِ وَلَمْ يَتَمَيْزَا، فَبِاخْتِصَاصِهِ بِأَحَدِهِمَا يَتَبَيْنُ الْمُهْمَلُ.

وَإِنْ جَحَدَ مَرْوِيِّهِ جَزْمًا: رُدَّ، أَوْ احْتَمَالًا: قُبِلَ فِي الْأَصَحِّ.

وفيه: من حدث ونسي.

وَإِنِ اتَّفَقَ الرُّوَاةُ فِي صِيَغِ الْأَدَاءِ و غَيْرِهَا مِنَ الْحَالَاتِ، فَهُوَ الْمُسَلْسَلُ.

If two narrators narrate from a shaykh and one of them (i.e. one of the narrators) passes away earlier, they are called Sabiq and Lahiq (i.e. the one who dies earlier is called Sabiq while the day who died later is called Lahiq; the word sabiq means what comes before and lahiq means what comes after).

If a narrator relates from two shaykhs whose names are the same and they cannot be differentiated, then the one who the narrator specializes in narrating from will be considered to clarify about the other.

If he denies what is related from him categorically, then the report will be rejected (i.e. categorized as 'mardood').

If he denies but with doubt, then it is accepted according to the soundest opinion.

Regarding this matter, the term used is 'Mun Haddatha Wa Nasiya' (meaning 'the one who narrated and forgot').

If the narrators conform in the phrasing (or action) used to convey a narration or (conforms) in some other manner (e.g. performing the same action when narrating ahadith), then it is called Musalsal narration (i.e. the narration which is narrated with the same repeating pattern of conveying).

CHAPTER 9

Forms of conveyance

وَصِيغُ الْأَدَاءِ:

1. سَمِعْتُ
2. وَحَدَّثَنِي،
3. ثُمَّ أَخْبَرَنِي،
4. وَقَرَأْتُ عَلَيْهِ،
5. ثُمَّ قُرِئَ عَلَيْهِ وَأَنَا أَسْمَعُ،
6. ثُمَّ أَنْبَأَنِي،
7. ثُمَّ نَاوَلَنِي،
8. ثُمَّ شَافَهَنِي.
9. ثُمَّ كَتَبَ إِلَيَّ،
10. ثُمَّ عَنْ، وَنَحْوَهَا.

The forms of conveyance are as follows (in descending order from the most to least level of confidence regarding direct hearing of hadith):

1. "Sami'tu" سَمِعْتُ ('I heard', alone from the shaykh; if the hearing was done in a class or group, the word used would be 'sam'ena; the scholars explain

that this word was not only used for mere ‘hearing’ but also understanding and then conveying)

2. “Hadhathani” حَدَّثَنِي، (‘he narrated to me’; if the Shaykh narrated to the class, the narrators would use the word ‘Hadhathana’)
3. “Akhbarani” أَخْبَرَنِي (‘he reported to me’)
4. “Qara’tu ‘alayhi” قَرَأْتُ عَلَيْهِ (‘I read to him’)
5. “Quri’a ‘alayhi wa-ana asma‘u” قُرِئَ عَلَيْهِ وَأَنَا أَسْمَعُ (‘it was read to him while I heard’)
6. “Anba’ani” أَنْبَأَنِي (‘he informed me’)
7. “Nawalani” نَاوَلَنِي (‘he put into my hands’)
8. “Shafahani” شَافَهَنِي (‘he told me verbally’)
9. “Kataba ilayya” كَتَبَ إِلَيَّ (‘he wrote to me’)
10. “An” عَنْ (‘“from”) and the like

فَالْأَوَّلَانِ: لِمَنْ سَمِعَ وَحْدَهُ مِنْ لَفْظِ الشَّيْخِ، فَإِنْ جَمَعَ فَمَعَ غَيْرِهِ، وَأَوَّلُهَا: أَصْرَحُهَا وَأَرْفَعُهَا فِي الْإِمْلَاءِ

وَالثَّالِثُ، وَالرَّابِعُ: لِمَنْ قَرَأَ بِنَفْسِهِ، فَإِنْ جَمَعَ: فَكَالْخَامِسِ.

وَالْإِنْبَاءُ: بِمَعْنَى الْإِخْبَارِ. إِلَّا فِي عُرْفِ الْمُتَأَخِّرِينَ فَهُوَ لِلْإِجَازَةِ كَعَنْ.

The first two ways of narration are used by narrators who heard the shaykh directly in a one-on-one situation. If a plural verb is used to describe this act, then it implies that he heard the hadith along with someone else (or in a group rather

than one-to-one). The first is the most explicit and is the highest-ranked with regards to the dictation (of hadith).

The third and fourth are for someone who read (to the shaykh) while alone. If the plural is used, then it is like the fifth.

'Informing' (i.e. the sixth form of conveying the hadith) is synonymous with 'reporting' (i.e. the third form of conveying the hadith). However, in the custom of the later generation of scholars, it is used for Ijaza (i.e. authorization to transmit or teach), like 'an (meaning 'from' which is the tenth form of conveying of hadith as listed above).

وَعَنْعَنَةُ الْمُعَاصِرِ مَحْمُولَةٌ عَلَى السَّمَاعِ إِلَّا مِنْ مُدَلِّسٍ

وَقِيلَ: يُشْتَرَطُ ثُبُوتُ لِقَائِهِمَا –وَلَوْ مَرَّةً–، وَهُوَ الْمُخْتَارُ

The unclear form of conveying the narration (called 'an'ana, i.e. saying "from so-and-so" rather than clearly explaining how the hadith was received) of contemporaries is understood to mean that the narrator heard (that narration) from the one that is mentioned above him in the chain – except when a camouflaging reporter (mudallis) uses such words; (in that case, the direct hearing of the hadith cannot be implied).

It is mentioned (by the scholars of hadith) that a condition for the acceptance is that the meeting of the said contemporaries be positively proven, even if it was only once; this is the preferred opinion (in this regard).

CHAPTER 10

Types of Ijazah

Written and verbal Ijazah:

وَأَطْلَقُوا الْمُشَافَهَةَ فِي الْإِجَازَةِ الْمُتَلَّفَظُ بِهَا، و المكَاتَبَةُ فِي الْإِجَازَةِ الْمَكْتُوبِ بِهَا

(Ijazah, i.e. permission to narrate, can either be given verbally or in writing. The following are the two terms that the hadith scholars use for mentioning these two types of Ijazah:)

With regards to Ijazah, they (i.e. the scholars of hadith) used the term *Mushafaha* for an oral authorization, and

The term *Mukataba* is used for written authorization.

Condition for certain types of authorizations to narrate:

وَاشْتَرَطُوا فِي صِحَّةِ الْمُنَاوَلَةِ اقْتِرَانَهَا بِالْإِذْنِ بِالرِّوَايَةِ، وَهِيَ أَرْفَعُ أَنْوَاعِ الْإِجَازَةِ. وكذا اشترطوا الإذن في الوجادة، والوصية بالكتاب وفي الإعلام، وإلا فلا عبرة بذلك كالإجازة العامة، وللمجهول وللمعدوم على الأصح في جميع ذلك.

For the authenticity of munawala (i.e. a scholar gives his book to one of his students), they stipulated that it be accompanied by permission to narrate from it too (for such Ijazah to be considered acceptable); it is the highest type of authorization (ijaza).

Similarly, the hadith scholars have put the condition of authority to narrate (from the shaykh) in case of:

- Wajadah (i.e. a written hadith or manuscript is found and from the writing or some note, it is identified that this is from so-and-so shaykh),
- Wassiyyah Bil Kitab (i.e. bequest of the book by the shaykh) and
- A'laam (i.e. the shaykh announces about a book that it contains the ahadith that he has heard from his shaykh i.e. the shaykh, is narrating certain ahadith or books from so-and-so and students listen to it – it will also not mean the authority to narrate even if the students have heard this statement from the shaykh unless the shaykh gives specific authorization to someone);

Otherwise (i.e. in the absence of permission to narrate), there is no trustworthiness (in the above forms of acquiring the hadith).

The status of general Ijazah:

This above type of ijazah is no different to:

- The general ijazah (i.e. the shaykh says that I give Ijazah to everyone without specifying anyone), or
- Ijazah of the majhool (i.e. an Ijazah to someone who cannot be distinguished or identified due to common names or other factors), or

- Ijazah to someone who is not present (i.e. if someone says that I give Ijazah to a particular fetus when it is born)

All these types of Ijazah are not acceptable according to the preferred opinion in this matter.

> Though the above-mentioned types of Ijazahs are not considered acceptable with regards to acceptance of ahadith narrated by the holders of such types of Ijazahs, however, many scholars still award this type of Ijazah, e.g. Ijazah to a group without knowing who is in the group; this is for the purpose of barakah only.

CHAPTER 11

Ilm ur Rijal: Names of the narrators

The main topic of this chapter is biographical evaluation of the narrators – a field of hadith studies called **Ilm-ur-Rijal** (عِلْمُ الرِّجال) which literally means 'Knowledge about Men'. In the terminology of hadith studies, it is understood as the Science of Narrators of Hadith. The goal of this branch of hadith studies is to conduct detailed studies of each and every narrator of hadith and verify their acceptability in terms of the adl (i.e. uprightness) and dhabt (i.e. ability to preserve the hadith). For this purpose, the history and biographies are studied, their names and lineages are explored, their contemporaries are studied, and a lot of other details are evaluated and recorded. Stressing the importance of biographical evaluations, Ali ibn al-Madini, an early authority on the subject, said, "Knowing the narrators is half of knowledge." This type of detailed verification is found in no other field of study in the world except the science of hadith.

Sometimes the term Ilm-ur-Rijal is used synonymously with Al-Jarh wa At-Ta'deel (which is discussed later on in this book).

Muttafiq wa muftariq

ثُمَّ الرُّوَاةُ إِنِ اتَّفَقَتْ أَسْمَاؤُهُمْ، وَأَسْمَاءُ آبَائِهِمْ فَصَاعِدًا، وَاخْتُلِفَتْ أَشْخَاصُهُمْ: فَهُوَ الْمُتَّفِقُ وَالْمُفْتَرِقُ

If the names of the narrators and the names of their fathers and up match, although they are different individuals, then such type of narrators are termed as "muttafiq wa muftariq" (meaning "same-name different-identity" narrators; it is very pertinent for the hadith scholars to know about them and check who is actually in the chain).

There are many narrations in which this important skill and knowledge are practiced by the hadith scholars, for example, there are six narrators with the name 'Khaleel Ibn Ahmed'. Similarly, there are four narrators with the name Khaleel Ibn Jafar Ibn Hamdan. It is therefore very important to identify which of the six is in the chains being studied. This identification is made in accordance with the circumstantial evidence and biographical studies.

One (or more) of such narrators may be strong while the others are weak, and vice versa. The classification process of the hadith can therefore be compromised if a weak narrator in the chain is confused with a strong narrator with the same name (and vice versa). The scholars of hadith have therefore clarified this aspect for us in detail and eliminated the possibility of confusion to a large extent.

Another possible impact of the same names but people being different can be that one of them might have met the subsequent and the preceding narrator and the other might not have. It is therefore very important to clarify which person is actually in the chain. There can be many other possible situations like

this and therefore it is very important to clarify this aspect of the Asma-Ur-Rijal (names of the narrators of hadith).

Mu'talif wa mukhtalif

وَإِنِ اتَّفَقَتِ الْأَسْمَاءُ خَطًّا، وَاخْتَلَفَتْ نُطْقًا: فَهُوَ الْمُؤْتَلِفُ وَالْمُخْتَلِفُ.

If the names match in writing but differ in pronunciation, then such narrators are terms as "Al-mu'talif wa Al-mukhtalif" (i.e. homographic-heterophonic, meaning same in writing or graphical appearance when written, but different in sound when pronounced. The examples of Mu'talif wa Mukhtalif include: Salam and Sulaim; Aqeel and Uqayl and so on).

Mutashabih:

وَإِنِ اتَّفَقَتِ الْأَسْمَاءُ وَاخْتَلَفَتِ الْآبَاءُ، أَوْ بِالْعَكْسِ: فَهُوَ الْمُتَشَابِهُ

وَكَذَا إِنْ وَقَعَ ذَلِكَ — الْاتِّفَاقُ فِي الْاسْمِ وَاسْمِ الْأَبِ، والْاِخْتِلَافُ فِي النِّسْبَةِ، وَيَتَرَكَّبُ مِنْهُ وَمِمَّا قَبْلَهُ أَنْوَاعٌ: مِنْهَا أَنْ يَحْصُلَ الْاِتِّفَاقُ أَوْ الْاِشْتِبَاهُ إِلَّا فِي حَرْفٍ أَوْ حَرْفَيْنِ. أَوْ بِالتَّقْدِيمِ وَالتَّأْخِيرِ أَوْ نَحْوَ ذَلِكَ.

If the names (of the narrators) match but their fathers are different, or vice versa, then such narrators are called "mutashabih" (meaning "resembling" narrators, i.e. same-name different-father-or-son narrators).

Likewise are termed the names of the narrators if the similarity occurred in the name and the name of the father while there is a difference in the affiliation (nisba to a particular region or people and so on).

Also, other categories derived from it and the previous one are when names are the same or similar except for a single letter or two; (another similar category is when) there is an advance or delay (of names) or similar (differences); and so on (e.g. Ayub Ibn Sayyar and Ayub Ibn Yasar – the former is the matrook narrator while the latter is thiqa)

A useful tip:

In order to search for narrators with the same names and so on, one can either refer back to books of Ar-rijal and find the relevant narrator, OR, one can search the narrators electronically through the hadith transmitters encylopedia which enlists 100,915 narrators in alphabetical order along with the search capability. It is a highly valuable resource, and we pray to Allah swt to make this effort sustain and keep benefitting the students of hadith.

The Hadith Transmitters Encyclopedia

HadithTransmitters.Hawramani.com موسوعة رواة الحديث

CHAPTER 12

Ilm ur Rijal: Levels of JARH (criticism or discreditation) and TA'DEEL (balancing or praise)

Some important aspects to be aware of regarding the narrators:

وَمِنَ الْمُهِمِّ:

- مَعْرِفَةُ طَبَقَاتِ الرُّوَاةِ
- وَمَوَالِيدِهِمْ، وَوَفِيَاتِهِمْ،
- وَبُلْدَانِهِمْ،
- وَأَحْوَالِهِمْ تَعْدِيلًا وَتَجْرِيحًا وَجَهَالَةً.

It is also important to know:

1. The different groups or cohorts of narrators at various times (Tabaqat)
2. The dates of their birth and death
3. Their lands and regions
4. Their conditions concerning commendation or praise (ta'deel), discreditation or criticism (jarh), and anonymity (jahala).

Books of tabaqat have been abundantly written by the hadith and fiqh scholars. Imam Ibn Al-Hajr Al-Asqalani has divided the narrators of the six famous collections into the following 12 tabaqat:

- The companions (there is no need for any evaluation among the companions as all of them are considered trustworthy being the companions of the most beloved ﷺ).
- Elders from the successors e.g. Saeed Ibn Musayyab etc.
- The middle tier among the successors e.g. Hassan Basri, Muhammad Ibn Sireen, etc.
- The successors of the middle-tier of the successors who mainly narrate from senior successors; this group includes Imam Zuhri, Qatadah, and other nobles
- The junior successors who have either met very few companions or have doubts surrounding their meeting with the companions e.g. Imam Abu Hanifa, Sulemain A'amash, etc.
- Those who followed the junior successors and didn't meet any companions e.g. Ibn Juraij etc.
- The elders from taba' tabi'ien (successors of the successors) e.g. Imam Malik, Imam Sufyan Thauri, etc.
- The middle-tier of taba' tabi'in e.g. Syufyan Ibn Uyainah etc
- The juniors from taba' tabi'in e.g. Imam Shafi'i, Imam Abu Dawud, Imam Abdur Razzaq, etc.
- The group of narrators who came after the last tabaqa of tabi'in and did not have the opportunity to meet any tabi'i, e.g. Imam Ahmed ibn Hanbal
- The tabaqa after the tabaqa who followed the taba tabi'in, e.g Imam Bukhari etc.

- The tabaqa who came after the above, e.g. Imam Tirmidhi, etc.

It is also to be noted that various subdivisions have been proposed within each of tabaqat above too. For example, Imam Al-Hakim An-Nisaburi divides the companions into the following 12 tabaqat:

- Those companions who had accepted Islam in Makkah (including the four rightly-guided caliphs)
- The companions who migrated to Abyssinia
- The people of the first pledge from the people of Madinah
- The people of the second pledge from the people of Madinah[16]
- Those companions who had accepted Islam before the consultation of pagans in Dar An-Nadwa[17]
- The early migrants to Madinah (i.e. the ones who reached Madinah before the Prophet ﷺ reached Quba)
- The companions who participated in the battle of Badr
- Those who migrated in the period between the battle of Badr and the treaty of Hudaibiyyah
- Those who participated in the pledge of the ones who received the pleasure of Allah swt (Bayah Ar-Ridwan)
- The companions who migrated in the period between the treaty of Hudaibiyyah and the conquest of Makkah (e.g. Khalid Ibn Waleed R.A. etc)

[16] The second pledge at al-Aqabah was a very important event in the mission of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ; 75 residents of the settlement of Medina pledged their loyalty to our master ﷺ as their leader. It preceded the Hijrah to Medina. The pledge occurred at a mountain pass (al-Aqabah) five kilometers from Makkah.

[17] Dar An-Nadwa was a place near Ka'abah where all important matter of Quresh used to be discussed. This is where they also did the consultancy to assassinate the Prophet ﷺ but Allah swt informed him and order him to migrate.

- Those companions who became Muslim after the conquest of Makkah
- Those children who had the honor of seeing the Prophet ﷺ at either the sermon of the final Hajj in Al-Arafat or during the conquest of Makkah.

It can be noticed that each of these groups of companions can provide some very beneficial insights from the times they spent with the Prophet ﷺ. It is also obvious that certain companions would fall into multiple groups, e.g. those who accepted Islam in Makkah, migrated to Abyssinia, participated in the battle of Badr, and so on. Similarly, it can be ascertained that if younger companions narrate something, it will indicate that there is probably another link involved in the chain which would be one or more of the senior companion(s).

Levels of jarh

وَمرَاتِبُ الْجَرْحِ:

وَأَسْوَؤُهَا الْوَصْفُ بِأَفْعَلَ، كَأَكْذَبِ النَّاسِ،

ثُمَّ دَجَّالٍ، أَوْ وَضَّاعٍ، أَوْ كَذَّابٍ.

وَأَسْهَلُهَا: لَيِّنٌ، أَوْ سَيِّئُ الْحِفْظِ، أَوْ فِيهِ مَقَالٌ.

Levels of Jarh (i.e. discreditation or criticism; the categories based on Jarh are divided into various levels):

- The most objectionable one in rank is described with the wording that depicts the superlative (on the balance of the word af‘al - e.g. “greatest of all liars” i.e. “akdhab al-nas”)

- “Arch-imposter”, “arch-fabricator”, “arch-liar” (“dajjal”, “wadhdha‘”, or “kadhdhab”)
- The lowest in this hierarchy are classifications such as:
    - “malleable” (‘Layyin’)
    - “chronically forgetful” (‘Sayyi Al-Hiffh’), and
    - “there are things said about him” (‘fihi maqal’).

Levels of ta’deel

وَمرَاتِبُ التَّعْدِيلِ:

وَأَرْفَعُهَا الْوَصْفُ بِأَفْعَلَ: كَأَوْثَقِ النَّاسِ،

ثُمَّ مَا تَأَكَدَ بِصِفَةٍ أَوْ صِفَتَيْنِ كَثِقَةٍ ثِقَةٍ، أَوْ ثِقَةٍ حَافِظٍ

وَأَدْنَاهَا مَا أَشْعَرَ بِالْقُرْبِ مِنْ أَسْهَلِ التَّجْرِيحِ: كَشَيْخٍ، وَتُقْبَلُ التَّزْكِيَةُ مِنْ عَارِفٍ بِأَسْبَابِهَا، وَلَوْ مِنْ وَاحِدٍ عَلَى الْأَصَحِّ.

And the ranks of commendation (ta’deel) are (in ranks too as described below with the first being the highest rank):

- To be described with the superlative (af‘al), e.g. “most trustworthy of people” (“awthaq al-nas”)
- What is emphasized with one attribute or two, e.g. “trustworthy-trustworthy”, “trustworthy and memorizer” (“thiqa thiqa” or “thiqa Hafidh”)

- Something that suggests proximity to the slightest levels of discreditation, e.g. “honest layman” (sometimes called generically as “shaykh”).

Attesting someone’s good record (tazkiya) is accepted from someone knowledgeable in its criteria, even if he is the only one to give such commendation; that it is according to the soundest opinion (in this regard).

Preference of Jarh over ta’deel

وَالْجَرْحُ مُقَدَّمٌ عَلَى التَّعْدِيلِ إِنْ صَدَرَ مُبَيِّنًا مِنْ عَارِفٍ بِأَسْبَابِهِ،

Discreditation (jarh) takes precedence over commendation (ta’deel) if it comes in a clearly elaborated manner from the scholars who are knowledgeable of the criteria for this.

(It is to be noted that the Jarh would not take precedence over Ta’deel if the stipulated conditions of Jarh are not met).

فَإِنْ خَلَا عَنِ التَّعْدِيلِ قُبِلَ مُجْمَلًا عَلَى الْمُخْتَارِ.

When the commendation is missing, even a limited Jarh about him would also be considered (i.e. it will be the deciding factor about that narrator) according to the opinion preferred by the scholars.

Please note that both the jarh and ta’deel can either be:

- Mubham (unclear – i.e. the jarh or the ta’deel in which the reason for the jarh of ta’deel is not provided), or

- Mufassar / Mubayyan (detailed/clear – i.e. the criticism and praise in which the reasons for Jarh or Ta’deel have been well-explained).

It is to be noted that Muffassar takes precedence over Mubham.

Considering the rules mentioned above, review the four scenarios below and note what takes precedence in each of the given scenarios and why.

- Jarh: Mubham; Ta’deel: Mubham
  Ta’deel takes preference as one of the conditions of acceptance of Jarh is that it should be clear

- Jarh: Mubham; Ta’deel: Muffasar
  Ta’deel takes preference because of the condition stipulated above

- Jarh: Muffassar; Ta’deel: Mubham
  Jarh takes preference as it is clear and the ta’deel is not

- Jarh: Muffassar; Ta’deel Muffassar
  Jarh takes preference as per the rules

CHAPTER 13

Ilm ur Rijal: Knowing the lineages and other aspects

Understanding the names, titles and kuna of the narrators:

فصل معرفة الكنى وغيرها

وَمِنَ الْمُهِمِّ مَعْرِفَةُ :

- كُنَى الْمُسَمِّينَ،
- وَأَسْمَاءِ الْمُكَنِّينَ،
- وَمَنِ اسْمُهُ كُنْيَتُهُ،
- وَمَنِ اخْتُلِفَ فِي كُنْيَتِهِ،
- وَمَنْ كَثُرَتْ كُنَاهُ أَوْ نُعُوتُهُ،

- وَمَنْ وَافَقَتْ كُنْيَتُهُ اسْمَ أَبِيهِ. أَوْ بِالْعَكْسِ،
- أَوْ كُنْيتُهُ كُنْيَةُ زَوْجَتِهِ،
- وَمَنْ نُسِبَ إِلَى غَيْرِ أَبِيهِ، أَوْ إِلَى أُمِّهِ، أَوْ إِلَى غَيْرِ مَا يَسْبِقُ إِلَى الْفَهْمِ،
- وَمَنِ اتَّفَقَ اسْمُهُ وَاسْمُ أَبِيهِ وَجَدِّهِ، أَوْ اسْمُ شَيْخِهِ وَشَيْخِ شَيْخِهِ فَصَاعِدًا وَمَنِ اتَّفَقَ اسْمُ شَيْخِهِ وَالرَّاوِي عَنْهُ.

وَمَعْرِفَةُ الْأَسْمَاءِ الْمُجَرَّدَةِ وَالْمُفْرَدَةِ، وَالْكُنَى، وَالْأَلْقَابِ، وَالْأَنْسَابِ

It is also important to know:

- The Agnomens (kuna كُنَى; it is the plural of kunya) of the people who are known by their names (so that when a sanad mentions their kunya, they can still be identified, e.g. Abdullah Ibn Umar is also known as Abu Abdur Rahman; in some of the narrations he is mentioned by his Kunyah)
- The names of the people who are more known by their kunya (so that when their kunya is mentioned in a sanad, their name can still be identified and vice versa, e.g. the famous tabi'i Ibn Shihab Az-Zuhri's real name was Muhammad Ibn Muslim Ibn Obaidullah Ibn Abdullah Ibn Shihab Az-Zuhri)
- Those whose kunya is the same as their name
- Those who have multiple agnomens or multiple titles (e.g. the famous narrator Ibn Juraij, whose full name was Abdul Malik Ibn Abdul Aziz Ibn Juraij, was known through two Kunyas, e.g. Abul Waleed, and Abu Khalid)

- The one whose agnomen matches his father's name, or vice-versa; or his agnomen matches his wife's agnomen (e.g. Abu Ayub Ansari R.A. and his wife Umm Ayub Ansariyyah R.A.); and
- Whoever is affiliated to someone other than his father or is affiliated to his mother, or to something that does not immediately come to mind; and
- The one whose name matches the name of his father and his grandfather (e.g. Imam Ghazali's name is Muhammad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Muhammad Al-Ghazali), or his shaykh's name and the shaykh's shaykh, and so on
- The one whose name matches his shaykh's name and the person narrating from him; [e.g. consider a chain, From Suleiman (At-Tabarani), from Sulieman (Al-Wasiti), from Suleiman (Ad-Dimishqi)]

(It is also important to know) the names of narrators that do not have a kunya (mujarada) and the names that are exclusive to one person (mufrada), and kunya and the titles and the affiliations.

Some narrators are identified through their titles and some have certain titles that are more famous than their original names. Accordingly, the mohaditheen need to know these details so that they can identify the narrators when studying and analyzing the chains.

وَتَقَعُ إِلَى الْقَبَائِلِ وَالْأَوْطَانِ، بِلَادًا، أَوْ ضَيَاعًا أَوْ سِكَكًا، أَوْ مُجَاوِرَةً. وَإِلَى الصَّنائِعِ وَالْحِرَفِ

And they (i.e. the affiliations of narrators) are in relation to:

- the tribes (e.g. Abu Hurairah Ad-Dawsi),
- homelands (e.g. Waliullah Ad-Dehlavi),

- countries (e.g. Salman Al-Farisi),
- cities, streets and alleys,
- neighborhoods, and
- certain crafts or professions/skills (e.g. Al-Jarrah).

Scholars explain the Muqadimeen (earlier generations) used to have their nisbah (affiliation) mainly towards the tribes, whereas muta'akhireen (later generations) used to have their nisbah towards the places of their dwelling.

وَيَقَعُ فِيهَا الْاتِّفَاقُ وَالْاشْتِبَاهُ كَالْأَسْمَاءِ، وَقَدْ تَقَعُ أَلْقَابًا.

In this, just like the names, some similarities (ittifaq) and confusions (ishtibah) occur. The same can also be noticed in the case of titles or nicknames.

Consider the examples below:

- Abu Mas'ud Uqbah Ibn Amr Al-Ansari R.A. is given the title Badri. It is not because he participated in the battle of Badr but because he opted to reside in Badr.
- The father of Imam Ishaq Ibn Ibrahim is called is Al-Rahwayh (the person of the path) as he was born when his mother was traveling towards Makkah for Hajj.

Understanding of biographies of narrators

وَمَعْرِفَةُ أَسْبَابِ ذَلِكَ، وَمَعْرِفَةُ الْمَوَالِي مِنْ أَعْلَى، وَمِنْ أَسْفَلِ، بِالرِّقِ، أَوْ بِالْحَلِفِ،

وَمَعْرِفَةُ الْإِخْوَةِ وَالْأَخَوَاتِ. وَمَعْرِفَةُ آدَابِ الشَّيْخِ وَالطَّالِبِ، وَسِنِّ التَّحَمُّلِ وَالْأَدَاءِ

[الأصح اعتبار سن التحمل بالتمييز وسن الأداء يقدر بالاحتياج والتأهيل — لذلك]

This sub-section explains the importance of knowing the biographies of narrators. Before starting this discussion, it is important to review the process employed by the hadith scholars with regards to biographical evaluations as explained by Imam Ibn Al-Hajr in An-Nuzhah. Hadith scholars of the past employed various methods of classifying the narrators. Some of them are:

- Observing the narrator's religiosity and asking others about it.
- Requesting the narrator in question to narrate from a particular living scholar and then returning to that scholar and comparing his narrations with those of the narrator under examination.
- If the narrator narrates from a deceased scholar, inquiring when he, the narrator in question, was born, when he met that scholar and where, and then comparing the dates provided in his response to the recognized dates of that scholars death and travels.
- Comparing the narrations of the narrator with those of narrators of established reliability in order to identify any distinctions that might be unique to that narrator, in particular, or in contradicting the others.
- Examination of the narrations either written or memorized by that narrator after the passage of time observing any discrepancies with their initial narrations.
- Deliberately altering the wording of a hadith or more to examine the ability of the narrator being examined to detect those alterations. This is

considered an acceptable practice as long as those alterations are brought to light following the examination process.

From the above, we can notice the level of detail and care employed in identifying the reliability of narrators. There are many other intricate details of this process which might be considered beyond the scope of this brief overview and introduction to the field.

As a result of the evaluation of narrators, each scholar would then conclude by describing the standing of each narrator. As a result, a system of terminology developed overtime carrying the codifications regarding the standing of each narrator (though some differences exist with regards to the terms used by the mohaditheen for the classification of narrators).

The outcomes of evaluations are divided into two main categories:

- those terms that constitute praise (ta‘deel) and
- those that constitute criticism (jarḥ).

Both these terms have already been explained in the previous chapter.

It is also important to know:

- About the mawali

Mawali is the plural for Maula and it is used for the one who frees a person or the one with whom there is an agreement or friendship, and the one on whose hand one accepts Islam. Therefore, there are different types of Mawali as shown below. Many narrators were known and identified through this type of relationship that became a part of their name and identity, e.g.

- Imam Malik Ibn Anas Asbahi At-Taimi had At-Taimi in his title as his tribe had mutual agreements with Banu Taym
- Imam Muhammad Ibn Ismail Al-Bukhari Al-Ju'fi had Al-Ju'fi in his title as his ancestors accepted Islam at the hands of Yaman Ibn Ahsan Al-Ju'fi.

- And if the mawali is top-wise (e.g. patrons and masters), or bottom-wise (e.g. clients and freedmen), and whether the reason for that is being a slave or is it because of some agreement
- About the brothers and sister narrators,

This to avoid confusion between the narrators who are brothers or sisters. For example, confusion can happen when Ibn Dinar is mentioned as a narrator; it could either be Abdullah Ibn Dinar or his brother Amr' Ibn Dinar. We should therefore know if the narrators had any brothers and sisters who would share similar names. Further details of their biographies such as who they are narrating from and narrating to, and which places they traveled to, and so on, would pinpoint who the exact narrator was. All these details are available in the books of Tabaqat of narrators (e.g. Tabaqat Ibn Saad and so on) as well as books Ilm Ur Rijal and Jarh Wa Ta'deel.

One can say that there can be other people too with the same name and lineage (e.g. Malik Ibn Dinar). In such a situation, biographies will tell us who they took the ahadith from and who they transmitted too and hence their era. If they are in the same era, we will also know the years in which they took ahadith and in what manner (e.g. written, or heard or so on), and this information is sufficient to differentiate the narrators with a similar name along with other biographical differentiators available in the relevant books.

- About the (narrator's) etiquette (or manner of dealing with) of the shaykh and the student(s),

Please refer to appendix 1 for reviewing some of the manners of the study of hadith.

- About his age of teaching and learning

Other factors considered in biographical research of narrators:

وَصِفَةِ كِتَابَةِ الْحَدِيثِ وَعَرْضِهِ، وَسَمَاعِهِ، وَإِسْمَاعِهِ، والرِّحْلَةِ فِيهِ،

(Regarding the narrators, it is also important to know:)

- About the manners of writing Hadith and reading it (back to shaykh i.e. the shaykh's own narrations),
- His sama' (listening to the ahadith from the shaykh) and recital, and
- Traveling for this purpose (i.e. to acquire ahadith and information about which lands he went to and with which shaykhs he met or studied under);

Types of books of hadith:

وَتَصْنِيفِهِ، إِمَّا عَلَى الْمَسَانِيدِ، أَوْ الْأَبْوَابِ، أَوْ الْعِلَلِ، أَوْ الْأَطْرَافِ.

(It is also important to know about:)

His writings (or books) of hadith, whether it is:

- With regards to the chains of narrations (Masaneed; or arranged in alphabetical order according to companions), or
- Categorized in specific subjects (Abwab), or

- According to certain defects (‘ilal), or
- According to the Atraaf (i.e. collection of numerous available chains for the ahadith being researched)

It is to be noted that the above are not the only types of books of hadith. There are numerous other types too. Some of them are briefly described below:

Al-Sahih or Al-Sihaah: These are the books of hadith in which the compilers tried to compile only the Saheeh ahadith; however, not all the books titled as such contain all the Saheeh ahadith. Examples of this type of books include: Saheeh Bukhari, Saheeh Muslim, Saheeh Ibn Khuzaima, Saheeh Ibn Hibban, etc.

Al- Jama’e or Al-Jami’: These are the books in which ahadith cover the following eight subjects

- Aspects related to the biography of the Prophet ﷺ - Seerah
- Manners/ethics/etiquettes - Adab
- Explanation of various chapters and ayat of the Quran - Tafsir
- Beliefs - Aqa’id
- Trials - Fitan
- Signs of the final day – Ishraat As-Sa’aah
- Rulings and laws of shariah - Ahkam
- Qualities of the Prophet ﷺ and the companions - Manaqib

It is to be noted that some of the books of hadith fall under multiple categories. For example, the full name of Saheeh Bukhari is:

الجامع المسند الصحيح المختصر من أُمور رسول الله وسننه وأيامه

Al-Jami Al-Musnad Al-Saheeh, Al-Mukhatasar min Umoor-i-Rasool Allah Wa Sunnanahu Wa Ayyamahu

It can be seen from the above that it is As-Saheeh as well as Al-Jami (along with the other categories mentioned in its name). It is because Imam Bukhari endeavored to compile only Saheeh Ahadith in it and at the same time it meets the criteria of the categories of narrations set for Jama'e collections of ahadith.

Some of the other examples of this type of books of hadith are: Jama'e al-Tirmidhi, Jama'e Sufyan ibn Saeed ibn Masrooq al-Kufi, and others.

Al Sunnan: These books contain ahadith categorized under various subjects and those subjects are categorized according to the order of the books of fiqh. They usually begin with the book of purification ('taharah').

Some of the examples of this type of hadith books include: Sunnan Saeed ibn Mansoor, Sunnan Abi Jafar, Sunnan al-Daarmi, Sunnan ibn Majah, Sunnan Abi Dawood, Sunnan Dar al Qatni, Sunnan al Kubra by Ibn al-Hussain Al-Bayhaqi and so on.

Al Musnad: These are the books in which ahadith are arranged according to the names of the companions. All the ahadith included in the book that are narrated by a particular 'Sahabi' are compiled in one place, no matter what subject any hadith deals with.

Some of the examples of this type of books of hadith include: Musnad Abi Ishaq al Jawhari, Musnad Ahmed, Musnad Imam Shafi'i, and so on.

Al-Muwatta: Such books contain ahadith of Prophet ﷺ as well as the athar and fatawa of the earlier generations.

Some of the examples of this type of books of hadith include: Mawatta Imam Malik, Muwatta Ibn Abi Za'ib, Mawatta Ibn Musa Maruzi, and so on.

Al-Musannaf: This category is fairly similar to Al-Muwatta and Al-Musannaf. This type of books contains a lot of sayings of the companions but limited opinions from the compiler.

Some of the examples of this type of books of hadith include Musannaf Abdul Razzaq, Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah, and so on.

Al-Mua'jam: In this type of books of hadith, alphabetical order is maintained for the narrators irrespective of whether they are from the companions or the teachers and shuyukh of the compilers.

Some of the examples of this type of books of hadith include Al-Mua'jam as-Saghir by Imam Tabarani (in which he has selected one hadith each from his teachers), Mua'jam al-Sahaba by Imam Baghwi, Mua'jum al-Sahaba by ibn Qana'e, and so on.

Al-Mustadrak: This type of books of hadith contain those narrations which meet the criteria set by certain mohaditheen but they did not include them in their collections. For example, Imam Al-Hakim An-Nisaburi wrote Mustadrak Ala Saheehayn in which he tried to include the ahadith that meet the criteria of Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim for their Saheeh collections but they did not include these narrations in their works. Though Imam Al-Hakim tried to accomplish this objective, many of the narrations in his Mustadrak are not considered by other hadith scholars to be meeting the criteria set by the Shaykhain.

Some of the other examples of this type of books of hadith include: Kitab Al-Ilzamat by Ali ibn Umar ibn Ahmad Dar Qatni, Al-Mustadrak ala as-Sahihain by Hafiz Abu Zar Harvi, and so on.

Al-Mustakhraj: In this type of the books of hadith, the compilers mention those ahadith which are mentioned in other books already, however, these compilers mention them with their own chains.

Some of the examples of this type of books of hadith include: Al-Mustakhraj by Abi Bakr Ahmad ibn Ibrahim Ismaili, Mustakhraj al-Ghatrifi by Hafiz abu Ahmad ibn Abu Hamid Ghatrifi, Mustakhraj Abi Muhammad at-Tusu, Mustakhraj Abi Saeed Nisaburi, and so on.

Al-Juzz: The books of this type contain ahadith collected on a particular topic only.

Some of the examples of this type of books of hadith include: Juzz al-Qira'at Khalf al-Imam by Imam Bukhari, Juzz Hajjah al-Widaa by Shaikh Muhammad Zakaria, and so on.

Al-Arba'een: In such books, 40 (or so) ahadith are compiled either on one subject or different ones. In fact, the objective to write such books was to follow a hadith related by Imam Al-Bayhaqi, in which Abul Darda R.A. narrated that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, that whoever amongst my 'ummah' remembers 40 of my ahadith that relates to 'deen', he will be raised on the day of resurrection as a 'faqih', and I ﷺ will be his witness and intercessor. (Mishkaat, Kitab al Ilm, 240/10) Though this hadith has been classified as Daif, the scholars till the current age have acted upon it and compiled several collections of 40 ahadith.

Australian Islamic Library (www.australianislamiclibrary.org) has gathered a large collection of classical as well as contemporary collections of Al-Arbaeen. The most famous of them is the Arbaeen of Imam Nawawi.

Al-Mawdu: This type of books of hadith contain the fabricated narrations compiled for the purpose of warning the students of hadith to be mindful of these narrations when studying hadith.

Some of the examples of this type of books of hadith include: Al-Mawduaat al-Kubra by Ibn Jawzi, Al-Minar al-Munif fi al-Sahih wa al-Da'if by Ibn Qayyam, Al-Mawduaat al-Kubra by Mulla Ali Qari, Silsila al-Ahadith al-Da'ifa by Allama Nasiruddin Albani, and so on.

Al-Ahkaam: These books contain ahadith related to Ahkam and rulings on various shara'i matters. One of the most famous examples of this type of books of hadith is 'Balugh al-Maram min Adillah al-Ahkam' by Hafiz ibn Hajr. Such books also fall in the category of 'Sunnan' because of their fiqh-based structure and organization.

Al-Mashikha: In such books, ahadith related to one particular Shaikh are compiled, for example, Mashikha al-Hafiz Abi Yaala al-Khalili

Al-Mujjared: Such books contain the matn of the ahadith along with the companion who narrated them; they skip the Isnad for brevity. They are normally derived from other books, e.g. 'Tajreed al Sahihain' by Imam Qurtabi and so on. This category is also known as Talkhees.

Al-Takhreej: In these books, the Isnad of the narrations (which are mentioned without the isnad in other books) are presented. Usually, the scholars compile

a number of various turuq or paths of narrations for writing this type of book and present those paths together along with a ruling about the narration or the group of narrations.

One of the examples of this type of books of hadith is: Takhrij Ahadith al-Rafa'e al-Kabeer by Hafiz ibn Hajar.

Al-Jama'a: Such books contain those ahadith from different reliable books but a repetition of 'isnad' is omitted, like 'Al Jama'a bayn al-Sahihayn by Imam Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Abu Nasr Humaidi (d. 488 H), Jama'a al Jawama'e by Allama Jajaluddin Sauti (d. 911 H), Silsila Ahadith As-Saheeha by Allama Nasir ud Din Albani, and so on.

Al-Faharis: Such books contain 'faharis' (lists) of the relevant books so that they can easily be found. One of the most famous books in this regard is the Fahrist of Ibn Nadeem. Other hadith-specific examples include: Miftah Sahih al-Bukhari and Miftah Sahih Muslim which are both compiled by Muhammad ibn Mustafa Tauqadi.

Al-Itraaf: In these books, ahadith are collected by their first or last words, so that a particular hadith may be recognized by the scholars doing the takhreej. Such books are very helpful to relocate a semi-forgettable hadith. Itraaf al-Saheehayn by Abu Masud Ibrahim ibn Muhammad Damishqi is an example of these types of books of hadith.

Al-Mushtehara: These are the compilations of Mashhur ahadith.

One of the examples of this type of books of hadith is Al-Durr al-Muntashra fi al-Ahadith al-Mushtehara by Allama Jalaluddin Suyuti.

Asbab al-Hadith: This type of book not only mentions the ahadith but also the contextual factors related to those ahadith including how, when and under what circumstances these traditions were narrated.

One of the examples of this type of the books of hadith is al-Lama'a fi Asbaab al-Hadith by Allamah Jalaluddin Suyuti.

Al-Zawwaid: This type of books of hadith contain a selection of ahadith in addition to what is included in a particular book. For example, Misbah uz Zujaja Fi Zawaid As-Sunan Ibn Majah and so on.

Al-Illal: In such books, those ahadith are compiled which have any objections on them or deficiencies - either in their Isnad or their matn.

Some of the examples of this type of books of hadith include: Kitab al-Illal by Imam Bukhari, Kitab al-Illal al-Kabeer by Imam Tirmidhi, and so on.

Sharh al-Hadith: These books contain the explanation (sharh) of hadith books. For example, Fath Al-Bari by Imam Ibn Hajr Al-Asqalani is the explanation of Saheeh Al-Bukhari.

Al-Azkaar: In such books, the ahadith relating to supplications are compiled. For example, Kitab al-Azkar by Imam Nawawi and so on.

Al-Musalsalat: These are the books that deal with the terms related to ahadith, narrators, and so on. One of the examples of this type of books of hadith is the book that you are reading right now: Nukhbatul Fikr by Imam Ibn Al-Hajr Al-Asqalani.

Al-Targheeb wa Al-Tarheeb: These books include those ahadith that relate to alluring and persuasion towards 'deen'. One of the examples of this type of books of hadith is Al-Targheeb wa al-Tarheeb by Zakiuddin Abdul Azeem ibn Munzari.

Ghareeb al-Hadith: These are books dealing with unique or difficult words in the ahadith. For example, Ghareeb al-Hadith by Abul Farj ibn Jawzi.

Please note that we have not covered all the types of the books of hadith in a comprehensive manner. For more details, please refer to more elaborate works on this subject, for example, Ar-Risala Al-Mustarifah (الرسالة المستطرفة لبيان مشهور كتب السنة المشرفة) by Muhammad Ibn Ja'afar Al-Katani.

Asbab Al-Hadith:

وَمَعْرِفَةُ سَبَبِ الْحَدِيثِ، وَقَدْ صَنَّفَ فِيهِ بَعْضُ شُيُوخِ الْقَاضِي أَبِي يَعْلَى بْنِ الْفَرَّاءِ، وصَنَّفُوا فِي غَالِبِ هَذِهِ الْأَنْوَاعِ.

One should also know the historical context for the ahadith (Asbab Al-Hadith). Some of the shaykhs of al-Qadhi Abu Ya'la bin al-Farra' wrote about it. They have written books in most of these genres.

This is just the beginning – keep moving:

وَهِيَ نَقْلٌ مَحْضٌ، ظَاهِرَةُ التَّعْرِيفِ، مُسْتَغْنِيَةٌ عَنِ التَّمْثِيلِ، وَحَصْرُهَا مُتَعَسِّرٌ، فَلْتُرَاجِعْ لَهَا مَبْسُوطَاتِهَا. وَاللَّهُ الْمُوَفِّقُ وَالْهَادِي، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ.

This is a basic list mentioning definitions without examples. It is difficult to be thorough, so consult the more detailed books (if you need more information).

Allah is the One Who grants success. He is the Guider. There is no God but He.

APPENDIX ONE

Manners of studying hadith

We need to understand the manners of teaching and studying hadith so that we can properly benefit ourselves and others and let this light of guidance illuminate our souls without any of our darkness coming in its way. Some of the important manners are briefly presented below.

Intention:

The first and foremost requirement is to have sincerity in intention. One should only study hadith to seek the pleasure of Allah swt and with an extreme love for the beloved Prophet ﷺ. One should not desire anything else from the knowledge – neither respect by others, nor money, nor praise, nor any status. It should only be for the sake of Allah swt.

Akhlaq:

The student and teacher of hadith should be extremely well-mannered and well-behaved with others. We are carrying the words of the beloved ﷺ. These words deserve the best and the sweetest of the carriers. These pearls are not for the one who has an ill behavior and attitude towards others.

Respect the scholars:

The students and teachers of hadith should be extremely respectful and humble towards other students and teachers. When the more knowledgeable are present, one should let them give their opinions and remain silent unless one finds something against the Shariah in which case one should respectfully and humbly present his point. While doing so, one should not forget that it is very much possible that one's own opinion might be at fault. One should therefore raise the point in the manner of a question rather than giving the verdict with limited knowledge.

Respect the inheritance of the Prophet ﷺ:

The words of the Prophet ﷺ are his blessed inheritance with us; we should respect these words. Part of this respect is to share these words with others while being in the state of purity and while in an appearance, time, and place that suit the lofty status of these words.

Nurture the students:

The teacher, as the spiritual father of the students, should nurture the love for hadith in them. If they are weak, one should look for the reasons for weakness and help them overcome. Different students have different strengths; some are good at memorization, some are good at tafaquh (or deeper understanding) and some are good at both. Each of these skills has its own merits and advantages.

Stop narrating ahadith when..:

When one's memory becomes weak, one should stop narrating ahadith verbally so that there is no risk of attributing anything to the Prophet ﷺ that he did not say or do or approve. The companions of the Prophet ﷺ and the great scholars had the practice of saying the following after narrating the ahadith even though

their memories were matchless: أو كما قال صلى الله عليه وسلم meaning "..., or as He, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said". Scholars explain that this also gives protection from any misinterpretations while conveying the ahadith (i.e. Riwayah Bil Ma'ana – conveying the meaning of hadith rather than the actual wording of the hadith). This is the humility that we should also adopt.

Practice the Adalah:

The students and teachers of hadith should practice that Adalah in their life too which they very critically review in the lives and conduct of the narrators of ahadith. They should not indulge in any major sins. They should seek forgiveness from Allah swt much more than the common people as they are the ones on whose straight path Satan is sitting to stop them and make them deviate.

Loving the books and places of knowledge:

It is the practice of the people of knowledge that they love their books and their places of knowledge. We should also try to walk in their illuminated footsteps and engage deeply with books and attach dearly with the places of knowledge and learning.

Traveling for hadith is the way of the righteous:

The companions and our illuminated predecessors used to travel country to country to learn the ahadith of the beloved master ﷺ. If we claim to be on this path, distances should never become our hurdle. When the love is strong, the long passages shrink. Let our quest for knowledge make us tread on this path of love too.

Revise and refresh what you know:

If we don’t come back often to what we remember, we will easily forget it. It is therefore very important to keep wiping off the dust on the knowledge in our heads and hearts. This can be done by writing, teaching, reading, being in the company of the scholars, going back to our notes and writings to revise our learning, and weeping on our mistakes.

Time is of the essence:

The students of knowledge of hadith should be more particular about attendance in the gatherings of learning than other people. We should always be there when these treasures are distributed so that we can collect as much of them as possible and avoid bankruptcy on the day when it would be most humiliating.

Strengthen your knowledge with your ibadah:

The students of hadith have to keep in mind that this knowledge is the light of guidance from Allah swt and He does not bestow this to any rebellion. We should therefore humble ourselves more and more in front of our Creator and be the ones who remember him sitting, standing, laying down, standing, walking, living, and dying.

May Allah choose each and every one of us to be the carrier of the noor of the blessed ahadith of the beloved Prophet ﷺ and enable us to spread this light into each and every household on this earth. May the light of our beloved never go away from our hearts and may our eyes never dry of the tears of love.

انت الحبيب وانت نور بصيرتي

وسراج عمري في القديم وفي غدي

You are the beloved; you are the light which makes me see

My lifetime's lantern! For my past and my tomorrow!

إني جعلت محبتي لك غايتي

وحجزت في رَكب المحبة مقعدِ

I have made my love for you the only thing I want

And fixed myself onto a saddle in the caravan of love

إني اعيش بكل وجداني لكم

وقتَ النهار وإن أويت لمرقدي

Let me be lost in your thoughts forever

Whether it be the time of light or when I am dead in my grave

أنا يا رسول الله فيك متيمٌ

أنا إن ذكرتك يا حبيبي أهتدي

O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, in your love I find fulfillment

My guidance is in when your name is mentioned.

اَللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ اَلْفَاتِحِ لِمَا أُغْلِقَ وَ اَلْخَاتِمِ لِمَا سَبَقَ نَاصِرِ الْحَقِّ بَالْحَقّ

وَ الْهَادِي إِلى صِرَاطِكَ الْمُسْتَقِيمِ وَ عَلَى آلِهِ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ و مِقْدَارِهِ الْعَظِيم

O Allah, bless our Master Muhammad, who opened what was closed and sealed what was before. He makes the truth victorious by the truth and he is the guide to Your Straight Path. And bless his Household as it befits his immense stature and splendor.

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